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The Irish in Jamaica during the long eighteenth century (1698-1836)

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THE IRISH IN JAMAICA DURING THE LONG EIGHTEENTH CENTURY (1698-1836)

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A thesis submitted to the School of History and Anthropology of the Queen's
University of Belfast in fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of
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Preface

In 2007 Nini Rodgers published *Ireland, slavery and anti-slavery (1645-1865)*, a book that brought together a vast range of new research, which encompassed the entire Atlantic basin.¹ Her study covered an extended chronological period, starting as far back as the sixteenth century and concluding with the abolition of slavery in the middle of the nineteenth century. This was a groundbreaking work in many respects and was described as ‘an invaluable platform for future studies of Ireland and the black Atlantic’.² For the first time, an academic work on Irish history explored the aspects of Ireland’s involvement in slavery, with a particular focus on the Caribbean. The book considered the first forays the Irish made into West Africa and Latin America, before moving on to the West Indies, North America and Ireland. Rodgers’ focus was mainly on the Irish involvement in slavery, but she also chronicled the connections that were developed with other European settlers and their networks. Her study outlined the unique position of the Irish in the West Indies, specifically those of the Catholic religion, who were able to move between the various islands with relative ease. She also emphasised the restrictions imposed on them. In many ways, Rodgers’ research was the catalyst for the thematic approach taken in this dissertation. While there is less emphasis here on slavery, the focus on the Caribbean made her book an important point of reference from which to develop the context of the Irish connections with Jamaica, an unexplored aspect of her work.

The research has taken place in London, Dublin, Belfast and Jamaica. Due to the fragmented nature of the primary source material, the dissertation has been divided into two sections. The first will provide the historical context, while the second will present the primary source material in specifically themed case studies. The School of History and Anthropology assisted with a travel grant for a visit to the National Archives in London. The Royal Historical Society part financed a two-week research trip to Jamaica to consult the

¹ Nini Rodgers, *Ireland, slavery and anti-slavery (1645-1865)* (Basingstoke, 2007).

² Daíre Keogh, ‘Hibernia and human traffic’ in *Irish Times*, 20 Oct. 2007.

government archives in Spanish Town. The University of the West Indies assisted with accommodation. The dissertation has been presented in accordance with the rules set out by the Irish Historical Society and the spelling has been modernised.

My thanks to the School of History and Anthropology at Queen's University of Belfast for their support during the course of study. I would especially like to thank my supervisors Professor David H. Hayton and Professor SJ Connolly. Dr. Nini Rodgers was very gracious with her time and feedback. Thanks to Dr. Steve Flanders, Dr. Paul Huddie, Dr. Tim Watt, Dr. Stuart Aveyard, Grace McGragh, Dr. Brian Kelly, Dr. Chris Marsh, Professor Catherine Clinton and Dr. Daniel Kowalski for their advice and encouragement. Special thanks to Professor Mary O'Dowd and Dr. Christer Petley for their patience, suggestions and thoughtful comments. This dissertation is dedicated to my family.

Abbreviations

JARD:	Jamaica Archives and Records Department
CSP:	W. Noel Sainsbury (ed.), <i>Calendar of State Papers Colonial, America and West Indies</i> (NB the entry number is given in the citation).
EAP	British Library, Endangered Archives Project 148 (Jamaica)
IRO:	Island Record Office (Twickenham Park, Jamaica)
JAJ:	Alexander Aikman, <i>Journals of the Assembly of Jamaica</i>
NLI:	National Library of Ireland (Dublin)
NLJ:	National Library of Jamaica (Kingston)
RIA:	Royal Irish Academy (Dublin)
PRONI:	Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (Belfast)
UCL Website	Legacies of British Slave-ownership, University College London

I

1 Themes and Approaches

The main subject of this dissertation is the Irish presence in Jamaica during the long eighteenth century. It will focus on the period 1692 to 1834, the years between the Port Royal earthquake and the enactment of the abolition of slavery. This period was chosen to survey the changing character of the Irish presence in colonial Jamaica. The dissertation will examine three aspects; firstly, it will outline the Irish presence, differentiating between Protestant, Catholic and Dissenter.¹ Secondly, it will study the Irish as part of Jamaican society, especially in relation to the other white settlers. Thirdly, it will place the Irish presence in Jamaica in the context of the British Empire. This chapter will contextualise the Protestant, Catholic and Dissenter Irish presence in Jamaica during the long eighteenth century. It will focus on discussions around the Irish and the British Empire, Atlantic history and Jamaican historiography. The themes of religion and Empire will be further surveyed in chapters 2 and 3.² The historiographical context presented in this first section will inform the case studies that feature in the second part.

In this chapter, the research aspects are discussed in the context of Ireland and Empire, Atlantic studies and Jamaican history. In order to explore these themes, the chapter has been divided into five sections. The first section will position this study within the discussion of the Irish, the Caribbean and the British Empire. A second section places the dissertation in the context of Atlantic studies. The third section will engage with Jamaican historiography. The fourth section will estimate the number of Irish in Jamaica, while the last section presents details on the sources used and the organisation of the dissertation. The rationale behind this structure is to provide a historiographical framework that can be applied to the individual case studies in section two.

¹ Ian McBride, *Eighteenth-century Ireland: the isle of slaves* (Dublin, 2009), p. 1.

² This follows a similar rationale as presented in Charles Ivor McGrath, *Ireland and Empire, 1692-1770* (London, 2012), pp 11-12.

Ireland, the Caribbean and Empire

The aim of this section is to position this dissertation within the historical discussion around Ireland and Empire. The case studies will consider the different experiences of the Protestant, Catholic and Dissenter Irish, focusing on the development of their connections with the Caribbean. In that context, two points of discussion have emerged that are relevant to this thesis.³ The first centres on the question of the colonial experiences of the Irish at home and abroad in relation to Empire. This will be explored here using two studies that focus on Ireland and the Caribbean. The second discussion centres on the issue of identity, asking whether the Irish became part of a British white settler identity or retained their 'Irishness'. In Chapter 3, these aspects will be further illustrated in the context of Jamaica. Firstly, this section will consider the Irish and Empire by focussing on their religious affiliation.

This dissertation makes a distinction between the Protestant, Catholic and Dissenter Irish settlers in Jamaica in the long eighteenth century.⁴ These three groups featured in studies of eighteenth century Ireland and Empire.⁵ Protestant Irish in this context refers to those who subscribed to the established Anglican church.⁶ In relation to Jamaica, these included, for instance, men such as William Broderick, whose family still had strong links with England; former Catholics like the Arcedecknes, who had converted to Anglicanism; and middle-class Protestants, such as Hugh Totterdell.⁷ In this dissertation, Dissenters refers to Presbyterians who originated predominantly from Ulster.⁸ The aspects of the different religious affiliations of the Irish in Jamaica will be further illustrated in Chapter 2.

³ Nicholas Canny, 'Foreword' in Kevin Kenny (ed.) *Ireland and the British Empire* (Oxford, 2004), pp vi-xvi.

⁴ This follows a similar categorisation used by Nini Rodgers concerning the Irish in the Caribbean; see Nini Rodgers, *Ireland, slavery and anti-slavery (1645-1865)* (Basingstoke, 2007), pp 119-45.

⁵ S. J. Connolly, *Religion, law, and power: the making of Protestant Ireland 1660-1760* (Oxford, 1992), pp 2-4; Jacqueline Hill, 'Convergence and conflict in eighteenth-century Ireland' in *The Historical Journal*, xlv (Dec., 2001), pp 1039-63; McBride, *Eighteenth-century Ireland*, pp 1-18.

⁶ Kevin Kenny, 'Ireland and the British Empire: an introduction' in idem, *Ireland and the British Empire*, p. 8.

⁷ Toby Barnard, *The kingdom of Ireland, 1641-1760* (Basingstoke, 2004), pp 6-7; David Hayton, *The Anglo-Irish experience, 1680-1730: religion, identity and patriotism* (Woodbridge, 2012), p. xiv; Barry Higman, *Plantation Jamaica 1750-1850: capital and control in a colonial economy* (Kingston, 2005), p. 147.

⁸ Robert Whan, *The Presbyterians of Ulster, 1680-1730* (Woodbridge, 2013), pp 3-5.

The origins of the Irish experiences in Jamaica can be traced back to the first English settlements in the Caribbean. Their presence in the West Indies began in the late 1620s with the settlement of Barbados, followed by Montserrat.⁹ Historiographically, it resulted in two relevant areas of study: the Irish involvement in the transatlantic trade and indentured servitude. The studies on the commercial connections between Ireland and the West Indies generally focused on the supply trade.¹⁰ The demand for provisions in the Caribbean forged an enduring trade link with Ireland in the seventeenth century.¹¹ While indentured servitude was a minor feature in Jamaica,¹² it does facilitate the positioning of the Catholic Irish within the white settler population; they were described as the ‘poor whites’ in the Caribbean during the seventeenth century.¹³ One example was the orphaned Patrick Burke from Dublin, who in 1739 arrived in London, where he was contracted by the merchant Joseph Whilton Sr under an indenture.¹⁴ Burke was shipped out to Jamaica to work as bookkeeper. The indenture was sold on upon arrival and Burke would have to serve the four years listed before being released.¹⁵ The case studies will consider the social position of Irish Catholics in Jamaica throughout the long eighteenth century. The early Irish presence raises the question of how the links between Ireland and the Caribbean were formed. For this we need to consider the Irish colonial experience in the seventeenth century, both at home and abroad.

Early seventeenth-century Ireland has been described as a laboratory for Empire, while the island of Montserrat has been presented in similar terms regarding the Irish

⁹ Jenny Shaw and Karen Block, ‘Subjects without an Empire: the Irish in the early modern Caribbean’ in *Past and Present*, no. 210 (Feb. 2011), pp 33-60.

¹⁰ McBride, *Eighteenth century Ireland*, pp 11-12.

¹¹ Thomas Truxes, *Irish-American trade* (Cambridge, 1988), pp 3-4.

¹² Trevor Burnard, *Planters, merchants, and slaves: plantation societies in British America, 1650-1820* (Chicago, 2015), pp 74-76.

¹³ Shaw and Block, ‘Subjects without an Empire’, p. 33.

¹⁴ ‘Indenture between Patrick Burke and Joseph Whilton, dated 30 June 1739’ (London Metropolitan Archives, CLA/047/LR/05/01/003, no. 88) (reproduced <http://www.jamaicanfamilysearch.com/Members/mindenture.htm> (8 Jan., 2016).

¹⁵ For the Burkes, see Chapter 6, section iii.

overseas.¹⁶ In relation to Ireland, Jane Ohlmeyer has pointed at the possibility that the English colonial structures at home prepared them for their involvement in the settlement of the new colonies.¹⁷ She pointed, for instance, at the Irish experience of the English law and court system.¹⁸ Ohlmeyer also noted that colonising had been instrumental in the urban and commercial development of Ireland.¹⁹ She also highlighted the ambiguous constitutional position of Ireland within the Empire, which she described as ‘full of contradictions’.²⁰ While Ohlmeyer situated her study in the seventeenth century,²¹ this dissertation will consider if the experiences in Ireland influenced the Protestant, Catholic and Dissenter Irish colonial behaviour when they settled in Jamaica in the long eighteenth century.

In the case of Montserrat, Donald Harman Akenson applied a similar laboratory model of the Irish and Empire.²² Whereas Ohlmeyer studied Ireland and its imperial character, Akenson presented Montserrat as a case study on the Irish in the colonies and argued that they behaved in similar fashion to the other white settlers. He was only partly successful in this,²³ but his work included a number of examples that demonstrated how the Irish on the island adapted themselves to changing circumstances. For instance, the case of William Stapleton illustrated the complex nature of the Irish presence. Catholic and a former army officer, Stapleton became governor of the Leeward Islands and pledged loyalty to the crown when his religious affiliation was questioned.²⁴ Akenson argued that the Irish on Montserrat displayed imperialist behaviour, which was connected to their colonial

¹⁶ Ian Duncanson, *Historiography, Empire and the rule of law: imagined constitutions, remembered legalities* (Abingdon, 2012), p. 54; Eric Richards, *Britannia's children: emigration from England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland* (London, 2004), p. 82.

¹⁷ Jane Ohlmeyer, ‘A laboratory for Empire? Early modern Ireland and English imperialism’ in Kenny, *Ireland and the British Empire*, p. 27.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 35-37.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 41-43.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 58.

²¹ Jane Ohlmeyer, ‘Introduction: for God, king or country’ in Jane Ohlmeyer (ed), *Political thought in seventeenth-century Ireland: kingdom or colony* (Cambridge, 2000), p. 16.

²² Donald Harman Akenson, *If the Irish ran the world: Montserrat 1630-1730* (Liverpool, 1997), pp 3-11.

²³ Andrew J. O'Shaughnessy, ‘Reviewed work: *If the Irish ran the world: Montserrat, 1630-1730* by Donald Harman Akenson’ in *The International History Review*, xx (Dec. 1998), pp 968-70.

²⁴ Akenson, *If the Irish ran the world*, pp 97-102.

experiences at home. He dismissed the notion that the Irish colonial experience was unique, rejecting Irish exceptionalism, pointing at the engagement with the institution of slavery.²⁵

The case studies in this dissertation will explore the differences in adaptability of the Protestant, Catholic and Dissenter Irish. This raises the question of how the Irish identity featured within the confines of the British colonial Empire in the Caribbean.

The identity and religious differences of the Irish in the context of Empire could be both fluid and fragmented in character, making them difficult to define.²⁶ However, two aspects feature when considering the above discussions about Protestant, Catholic and Dissenter and the relationship between Ireland, the Caribbean and Empire. Firstly, how did the religious differences influence the relationship of the Irish with the other white settlers? And secondly, what did an Irish identity in Jamaica entail during the eighteenth century? This dissertation will investigate to what extent the Irish in Jamaica subscribed to the British identity in the context of Empire, raising the question of whether they should be viewed as ‘true Irish people, or whether they became hybridised Britons’.²⁷ This takes into account that Protestants from Ireland had a different experience of Empire than Irish Catholics and Dissenters.²⁸ This dissertation is placed within the study of the Irish colonial experiences within the British Empire.²⁹ It will investigate if the Protestant Irish aligned themselves to the British identity and how the Catholic Irish in Jamaica were perceived in the context of Empire. Similarly, it will consider the position of the Irish Dissenters that settled on the island, especially in relation to identity.³⁰

²⁵ Ibid., 171-75.

²⁶ Stuart Ward, ‘Imperial identities abroad’ in Sarah Stockwell (ed.), *The British Empire; themes and perspectives* (Oxford, 2008), p. 220.

²⁷ Canny, ‘Foreword’, p. viii.

²⁸ McGrath, *Ireland and Empire*, pp 13-15.

²⁹ Barry Crosbie, *Irish imperial networks: migration, social communication and exchange in nineteenth century India* (Cambridge, 2012), pp 8-11.

³⁰ Kevin Kenny, ‘The Irish in Empire’, in idem, *Ireland and the British Empire*, pp 96-98.

The discussions around Ireland and Empire raise questions around religious affiliation, colonial experiences, adaptability and identity. As Nicholas Canny emphasised, a number of individual case studies need to be presented before any judgement can be made about the ‘reception, behaviour and loyalty’ of the Irish within the structures of Empire.³¹ As this section has demonstrated, the approach needs to differentiate between colonial experiences of Protestant, Catholic and Irish Dissenters in Jamaica. This starts in the seventeenth century when the Irish settled in the Caribbean and forged commercial links with the region. The ‘laboratory’ examples of Ireland and Montserrat discussed the colonial experiences at home and overseas and illustrated the adaptability of the Irish within the structures of Empire. This is linked with the issue of identity and religious differences when we study the relationship between the Irish and the other white settlers. The questions around the Irish in Jamaica and Empire will be further illustrated in Chapter 3, focusing on the themes of colonial governance, military presence and the abolitionist period.

II Ireland, the Caribbean and the Atlantic World

This section will identify the relevant discussions concerning Ireland, the Caribbean and the Atlantic world, connecting the themes of settlement, trade, slavery and identity to the Irish in Jamaica.³² Atlantic history favours a largely thematic approach and facilitates the drawing of comparisons and the study of intercontinental relationships.³³ This dissertation is positioned among the studies in Atlantic history that consider the social and economic implications of the movement of Irish people.³⁴ It will focus on the aspects of Irish connections, trade, mobility and the implications of religious affiliations.³⁵ An example of this approach is the

³¹ Canny, ‘Foreword’, p. xv.

³² Nicholas Canny, ‘Writing Atlantic history; or, reconfiguring the history of colonial British America’ in *The Journal of American History*, lxxxvi (Dec., 1999), p. 1095.

³³ David Armitage and Michael J. Braddick, ‘Introduction’ in idem (eds), *The British Atlantic world 1500-1800* (Basingstoke, 2002), p. 3.

³⁴ Nicholas Canny, ‘Atlantic history and global history’ in Jack. P Greene and Philip D. Morgan (eds), *Atlantic history: a critical appraisal* (Oxford, 2009), p. 318.

³⁵ Angela McCarthy, ‘Introduction’ in eadem (ed.), *Ireland in the world: comparative, transnational, and personal perspectives* (Abingdon, 2015), pp 1-6.

study by Orla Power about the Irish presence on the Danish island of St Croix. She examined the different behaviour of the Protestant, Catholic and Dissenter settlers from Ireland and their connections around the Atlantic. Central to her investigation was the diverse but distinct Irish community on the island.³⁶ A similar approach will feature in this dissertation by focusing on Irish family relationships around the Atlantic basin and their social and economic connections.³⁷

In relation to Atlantic history, two themes are relevant to this dissertation: the family links between Jamaica, Britain and Ireland, and the Irish involvement in the institution of slavery. It firstly poses the question about the extent of family relationships of the Irish in Jamaica. Secondly, it will consider Ireland and slavery in an Atlantic context. Regarding the eighteenth century, the historiographical focus has been on Ulster Presbyterians and the development of their links.³⁸ One specific study, for instance, considered their presence in Philadelphia.³⁹ The complexity of the Irish presence within the Atlantic world was illustrated by Orla Power in the case study of Nicholas Tuite. He was a second-generation Irish Catholic who moved from Montserrat to St Croix, before settling in London, where he developed Atlantic trade connections. Power argued that Catholics in the English-speaking Caribbean found ‘their status was never truly secure’.⁴⁰ The case study of Nicholas Tuite also illustrated how the Irish Caribbean presence was based on kinship. Tuite arrived on St Croix together with his brother Richard and ensured that his offspring married into the important families,

³⁶ Orla Power, ‘Friend, foe or family? Catholic Creoles, French Huguenots, Scottish Dissenters: aspects of the Irish diaspora at St. Croix, Danish West Indies, c.1760’ in Niall Whelehan (ed.), *Transnational perspectives on modern Irish history* (Abingdon, 2015), pp 30-44.

³⁷ David T. Gleeson, ‘The Irish Atlantic?’ in idem (ed.), *The Irish in the Atlantic world* (Columbia, 2010), pp 1-18; Kerby Miller, *Irish immigrants in the Land of Canaan: letters and memoirs from colonial and revolutionary America, 1675-1815* (Oxford, 2003), pp 3-4.

³⁸ G. E. Kirkham, ‘Introduction’ in R. J. Dickson, *Ulster emigration to colonial America 1718-1775* (Belfast, 1988), p. xvii.

³⁹ Maurice J. Bric, *Ireland, Philadelphia and the re-invention of America, 1760-1800* (Dublin, 2008), pp 1-9.

⁴⁰ Orla Power, ‘The “quadripartite concern” of St Croix: an Irish Catholic experiment in the Danish West Indies’ in Gleeson, *The Irish in the Atlantic world*, pp 213-28.

including the Stapletons.⁴¹ Rodgers' study found the Presbyterian Delap family from Donegal who had connections with the Leeward Islands, where they owned a large plantation on Antigua.⁴² She outlined the trade connections that the Presbyterians developed around the Atlantic based on kinship.⁴³ The case studies in this dissertation will consider the extent of the Irish family links across the Atlantic and how they developed.

The research by Rodgers revealed the extent of Irish involvement in the institution of slavery and the abolition movement. She outlined how the Protestant, Catholic and Irish Dissenters in the Caribbean participated in the plantation economy and the institution of slavery.⁴⁴ Their involvement was further illustrated by the development of a database on slave compensation by UCL researchers. One of the researchers, Nicholas Draper, surveyed the families from Ireland or with Irish connections that appeared in the list of claimants.⁴⁵ He found that Ireland played a role in the institution of slavery and also demonstrated the importance of slavery to the development of Ireland. Draper noted that the provisions trade assisted in the development of the port towns of Dublin, Belfast and Cork. These bulk goods served the plantation economy and especially the enslaved.⁴⁶ In that context, Ireland had an indirect link with slavery in the Caribbean. Legislation prevented it from engaging in the slave trade directly for much of the eighteenth century.⁴⁷ The relationship between the Irish in Jamaica and the institution of slavery will be further illustrated in Chapter 3.

⁴¹ Orla Power, 'Beyond kinship: a study of the eighteenth-century Irish community at Saint Croix, Danish West Indies' in *Irish Migration Studies in Latin America*, v (Nov. 2007), pp 207-14.

⁴² Rodgers, *Ireland, slavery and anti-slavery*, pp 85-88.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 145-58.

⁴⁴ Nini Rodgers, 'The Irish in the Caribbean 1641-1837: an overview' in *Irish migration studies in Latin America*, v (2007), pp 145-55.

⁴⁵ Nick Draper, 'Research note: "Dependent on precarious subsistences": Ireland's slave-owners at the time of emancipation' in *Britain and the World*, vi (Sept. 2013), pp 220-42.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ Rodgers, *Ireland, slavery and anti-slavery*, p. 113.

The mercantile links with the Caribbean in the long eighteenth century have been the subject of a number of studies.⁴⁸ They largely concerned the supply trade, which was described as consisting of ‘85 per cent of Irish export to America in the later colonial period’.⁴⁹ The Irish mostly supplied salted provisions to Jamaica in the eighteenth century. Maintaining the trade relations across the Atlantic generally involved Irish merchants that resided both in Ireland, England and the West Indies.⁵⁰ A case study by Thomas Truxes found Dutch-Irish cooperation during the Seven Years War. It demonstrated how the Irish used Europe-wide connections to ensure their products managed to reach the French Caribbean despite a British blockade.⁵¹ The study revealed the complex character of the cooperation that involved merchants in London, Rotterdam, Cork and the Dutch and French West Indies.⁵² In a different case study, Power presented the example of the Irish-born Dissenter Andrew Irwin, who engaged in the transatlantic trade. He maintained Irish connections in the Caribbean, London and Ireland, including with the aforementioned Nicholas Tuite. Irwin used these relationships to set up a business venture that shipped provisions to present-day Haiti in exchange for contraband sugar, which was transported to Europe. Tuite acted as his representative in London, but he turned on Irwin when the English authorities confiscated the cargo.⁵³

These two case studies are examples of the Atlantic connections of Irish merchants, an aspect that will be investigated further in the context of Jamaica. Power also pointed at the difference in relationships among the Irish on St Croix. She described Protestants as more business like and formal, while Irish Catholics maintained more informal links. This applied

⁴⁸ See Truxes, *Irish-American trade*; and Robert C. Nash, ‘Irish Atlantic trade in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries’ in *The William and Mary Quarterly*, xlii (Jul. 1985), pp 329-56.

⁴⁹ Nash, ‘Irish Atlantic trade’, p. 330.

⁵⁰ Craig Bailey, ‘Metropole and colony: Irish networks and patronage in the eighteenth-century Empire’ in Enda Delaney and Donald MacRaild, *Irish migration, networks and ethnic identities* (Abingdon, 2007), pp 18-38.

⁵¹ Thomas Truxes, ‘Dutch-Irish cooperation in the mid-eighteenth century wartime Atlantic’ in *Early American Studies*, x (Spring, 2012), pp 309-10.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 317-20.

⁵³ Power, ‘Friend, foe or family?’, pp 33-40.

to both family relationships and business partnerships.⁵⁴ The character of the mercantile links of the Irish with Jamaica will be considered further in the case studies. Both the family and trade connections contributed to the aspect of Irish movement around the Caribbean basin, including Jamaica.

The movement of Irish people to Jamaica in the long eighteenth century highlights the issue of mobility in an Atlantic context.⁵⁵ Two aspects feature; firstly, what were the reasons that the Irish decided to move to the island? As the circumstances were different for the Protestant, Catholic and Dissenter settlers, their experiences require separate assessments.⁵⁶ Secondly, the Irish that settled in the Caribbean had a tendency to continue to move between different islands. As the historiography showed, especially Catholics moved between jurisdictions.⁵⁷ Like the majority of Europeans moving to the New World in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the Irish generally migrated with a view to settling permanently.⁵⁸ A small number viewed their stay as temporary, which will be discussed further below. The family links mentioned above formed an important part of the migration of Irish people. In the historiography of the Irish in the Caribbean, the so-called ‘Tribes of Galway’ were identified as an extended network of families from the West of Ireland.⁵⁹ These families had connections around the Atlantic basin and moved accordingly, especially to the island of Montserrat. Rodgers found the Catholic family Blake with Galway links who settled in the Caribbean as merchants. Their letters revealed how they developed their connections through the supply trade.⁶⁰ She found similar relationships among the Presbyterian Delap family, who expanded their links around the Caribbean, including to Jamaica, while retaining their

⁵⁴ Ibid., 40-41.

⁵⁵ Louis M. Cullen, ‘The Irish Diaspora of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries’ in Nicholas Canny, *Europeans on the move: studies on European migration, 1500-1800* (Oxford, 1994), p. 114.

⁵⁶ Natalie Zacek, *Settler society in the English Leeward Islands 1670-1776* (Cambridge, 2010), pp 66-71, 121-23.

⁵⁷ Shaw and Block, ‘Subjects without an Empire’, pp 33-60.

⁵⁸ Richards, *Britannia’s children*, pp 80-82.

⁵⁹ Orla Power, ‘The 18th century Irish sugar and slave trade at St. Croix’ in Igor Pérez Tostado and Enrique García Hernán (eds), *Ireland and the Iberian Atlantic (1580-1823)* (Valencia, 2010), pp 54-55.

⁶⁰ Martin J. Blake, *Blake family records 1600-1700* (London, 1905), pp 106-11.

connection with Co. Donegal.⁶¹ The Protestant Irish and the Caribbean remains an underdeveloped area of study, especially in relation to their mobility. These examples illustrate the difference in the Irish experiences, which resulted in the fragmented nature of the individual case studies.

The seventeenth-century Caribbean had less well defined jurisdictions as various European settlements were still developing. While Montserrat and Barbados had connections with Ireland, there were different Irish relationships around the Caribbean basin. Several historians with an interest in the Caribbean considered the Irish contribution, especially in a cultural and social context.⁶² The study by Shaw and Block found that the Irish in the region were mobile and managed to find opportunities on different islands. Qualifying them as ‘subjects without Empire’, they outlined how the Catholic Irish were met with widespread suspicion in the seventeenth century. They also noted how the Catholic Irish were able to move between the English, French and Spanish-speaking Caribbean.⁶³ They also argued that the Irish generally focused on the English Caribbean, as it provided greater opportunities to become ‘socially mobile’.⁶⁴ The mobility aspects of the Irish in an Atlantic and inter-island context will be explored further in the case studies, especially as the Irish people that arrived on the island had a variety of skills and ambitions.

III *Jamaican Historiography*

This section will consider the Protestant, Catholic and Dissenter Irish presence in the context of Jamaican historiography. It will discuss how they featured and outline their place in the white settler society, especially their relationship with the English and Scottish. It will also consider the question of identity of the Irish in Jamaica. Since Patrick Browne published his survey of Jamaica in 1756, the white settlers on the island were viewed as ‘one united

⁶¹ Rodgers, *Ireland, slavery and anti-slavery*, pp 85-88.

⁶² Bridget Brereton, ‘Regional histories’ in Barry W. Higman (ed.), *General history of the Caribbean: methodology and historiography of the Caribbean* (6 vols, London, 1999) vi, p. 308.

⁶³ Shaw and Block, ‘Subjects without Empire’, p. 33.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 59-60.

people'.⁶⁵ Historians such as Trevor Burnard and Jack P. Greene have continued to point towards this concept of unity.⁶⁶ The question here is to what extent the Protestant, Catholic and Dissenter Irish considered themselves part of the unified white settler population of Jamaica. A discussion of the Irish and white settler society in Jamaican historiography will contextualise the aspect of unity.

Since the eighteenth century, the Irish occasionally appeared in historical writing on the economic, social and cultural developments of the white settlers in Jamaica. For instance, the late eighteenth-century historian Edward Long highlighted the Irish involvement in the supply trade and their presence as servants in the seventeenth century.⁶⁷ He and the other chroniclers that published about Jamaica in the eighteenth and nineteenth century rarely contextualised the role of the Irish further.⁶⁸ While Patrick Brown argued that the white settlers formed a unified part of the population, he did categorise the white settlers as 'planters, settlers, merchants and dependents'.⁶⁹ Long later added the distinction between Jamaican-born (or Creole) and European settlers.⁷⁰ This approach was carried through into later studies in the twentieth century, such as those by Jack P. Greene.⁷¹ A recent study highlighted the diversity of the white settler society and pointed at wealth as the defining factor in the social ranking.⁷² Because of the nature of the Irish presence, the dissertation will focus on the religious aspect in the study of the white settlers in Jamaica, which will be linked to the experiences of the Protestant, Catholic and Dissenter Irish.

⁶⁵ Patrick Browne, *The civil and natural history of Jamaica* (3 vols. London, 1754), p. 22.

⁶⁶ Jack P. Greene, *Settler Jamaica in the 1750s: a social portrait* (Charlottesville, 2016), pp 8-9; Trevor Burnard, *Mastery, tyranny, and desire, Thomas Thistlewood and his slaves in the Anglo-Jamaican world* (London, 2004), pp 79-87.

⁶⁷ Edward Long, *History of Jamaica* (3 vols, London, 1774) i, pp 550-51.

⁶⁸ George W. Bridges, *Annals of Jamaica* (2 vols, London, 1928), i, pp 282-83; William J. Gardner, *A history of Jamaica* (London, 1873), p. 186; Robert Renny, *A history of Jamaica* (London, 1807) p. 178.

⁶⁹ Browne, *The civil and natural history of Jamaica*, p. 22.

⁷⁰ Long, *History of Jamaica*, ii, p. 260; Gardner, *History of Jamaica*, p. 164, Renny, *A history of Jamaica*, p. 209.

⁷¹ Greene also included free blacks and mulattoes in his study of the settler society of Jamaica, see Greene, *Settler Jamaica in the 1750s*, p. 9.

⁷² Douglas Hamilton, *Scotland, the Caribbean and the Atlantic world Scotland, the Caribbean and the Atlantic world, 1750-1820* (Manchester, 2005), pp 39-42.

In the eighteenth century, the religious life of the white settlers in Jamaica centred on the Anglican Church. The Catholic and Presbyterian churches were formally established towards the end of the century. In modern historiography, the religious affiliation of the Irish was mentioned a number of times, when, for instance, a number of Protestant lawyers from Ireland featured in local politics at the start of the eighteenth century.⁷³ Similarly, one study revealed the Irish involvement in establishing the Catholic Church in Jamaica in 1791, although it omitted a survey of the Catholic presence in the eighteenth century.⁷⁴ The Dissenters in Jamaica did not feature in a specific study. This dissertation will consider if the Protestant, Catholic and Dissenter Irish displayed a sense of unity with the others settlers. The white settlers in Jamaica were predominantly of English, Scottish and Irish origin.⁷⁵ These different nationalities had their own social and cultural backgrounds. Many were male, young and first-generation immigrants with the ambition to find wealth.⁷⁶ This leads to the question of how the Irish in Jamaica related to the English and Scottish presence, and how important these differences were in origin, when taking into consideration the concept of white unity.

In Jamaica, the structures of a civil society were introduced after the completion of the conquest of the island in 1660.⁷⁷ This meant that the English settlers implemented political structures and a social order that they were familiar with.⁷⁸ Specifically, the local government, courts and laws resembled the English system and were linked to the Church of England.⁷⁹ The other white settlers, like the Scottish and Irish, had to adapt to the English political and social structures. The militia, for instance, required the attendance of a Church

⁷³ Agnes M. Whitson, *The constitutional development of Jamaica, 1660-1727* (Manchester, 1929), p. 136.

⁷⁴ Francis J. Osborne, *History of the Catholic Church in Jamaica* (Chicago, 1988), pp 161-65.

⁷⁵ Kamu Brathwaite, *The development of Creole society in Jamaica, 1770-1820* (London, 1971), p. 105; Burnard, *Planters, merchants, and slaves*, p. 168.

⁷⁶ Burnard, *Mastery, tyranny, and desire*, pp 18-19.

⁷⁷ James Robertson, 'Late seventeenth-century Spanish Town, Jamaica: building an English city on Spanish foundations' in *Early American Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, vi (Fall 2008), pp 346-90.

⁷⁸ Susan Dwyer Amussen, *Caribbean exchanges: slavery and the transformation of English society, 1640-1700* (Chapel Hill, 2009), p. 15.

⁷⁹ David Lambert, *White Creole culture, politics and identity during the age of abolition* (Cambridge, 2005), pp 18-19.

of England service on a Sunday, when martial law was declared.⁸⁰ As the case studies will demonstrate, there were several instances where origin mattered in the social order on the island. James Robinson's studies on the urban centres in Jamaica highlighted, for instance, the presence of the Freemasons, who by the end of the eighteenth century had English, Scottish and Irish lodges.⁸¹ It raises the question of how the Irish presence compared to that of the Scottish on the island.

The Scottish settlers featured in the studies by Alan Karras and Douglas Hamilton, who considered both the transatlantic links and aspects of migration.⁸² Hamilton found similarities between the Irish and Scottish experiences, with both groups fostering commercial links using wider family connections.⁸³ While the Scots increased in number, their political profile in the first half of the eighteenth century was less prominent in comparison to the Protestant Irish.⁸⁴ By the end of the eighteenth century, the Scots were the largest European settler group on the island.⁸⁵ Karras introduced the concept of *sojournism*, describing how middle-class professionals moved across the Atlantic to obtain a fortune and return to Scotland.⁸⁶ He did emphasise that there was only a small portion of migrants who could afford to do this. But as the case studies will illustrate, several Irish sojourned in

⁸⁰ Jamaica had a militia that was responsible for the defence of the island in peacetime. It had been formed in 1662 and was put into action when martial law was declared. All able men were enlisted, with the elite functioning as the officer class and the rest of the white population as soldiers. The militia was organised in regiments, which gathered to exercise once a month during peacetime. The Governor's regiment featured the most senior officers in the militia. The assembly was reluctant to call the militia for a sustained period of time, as the absence of the men had an impact on the economy; see Roger N. Buckley, *The British army in the West Indies, society and the military in the revolutionary age* (Kingston, 1998), pp 52-53; Andrew O'Shaughnessy 'Redcoats and slaves in the British Caribbean' in Robert L. Paquette and Stanley L. Engerman (eds), *The Lesser Antilles in the age of European expansion* (Miami, 1996), pp 116-17; John Stewart, *A view of the past and present state of Jamaica* (Edinburgh, 1823), pp 160-67.

⁸¹ James Robertson, 'Eighteenth-century Jamaica's ambivalent cosmopolitanism' in *History* (London) xcic (2014), p. 627.

⁸² For an overview of the historiography of the Scottish in the Caribbean see Michael Morris, *Scotland and the Caribbean c. 1740-1833: Atlantic archipelagos* (Abingdon, 2015), pp 13-18.

⁸³ Hamilton, *Scotland*, pp 2-7, 87.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 143-44.

⁸⁵ Tom M. Devine, *Scotland's Empire 1600-1802* (London, 2003), pp 226-32.

⁸⁶ Alan L. Karras, *Sojourners in the sun, Scottish migrants in Jamaica and the Chesapeake 1740-1800* (London, 1992), pp 1-9.

Jamaica.⁸⁷ While studying the Scottish presence in Jamaica, Karras had to define those individuals he considered to be originating from Scotland. He established that individuals born in Scotland and/or educated there were Scottish settlers on the island.⁸⁸ This approach, besides identifying by surname, helps to avoid issues surrounding the identification of the Irish.⁸⁹ The Scottish settlers in Jamaica were larger in number than the Irish and largely of a Presbyterian persuasion.⁹⁰ The examples from the studies on the Scottish presence raise the question of the relationship between the Irish and Scottish Presbyterians on the island. The case studies will consider the position of the Irish Dissenters in relation to their Scottish co-religionists and the other white settlers.

As outlined above in the first section of this chapter, the identity of the Protestant, Catholic and Dissenter Irish in Jamaica remained fluid. For the white settlers in Jamaica, Burnard argued that ‘being thought of as British was immensely important (...) and became the ideological backbone of their politics and cultural identity’.⁹¹ The question posed here is how the Irish identity featured in the historiography of Jamaica, especially in the context of religious affiliation and slavery. For this we need to consider the work of Joseph Williams, a North American Jesuit priest who published a short study on the Irish in Jamaica. In his research that was published in 1939, Williams equated Irishness with Catholicism and made the observation that ‘the early Irish in Jamaica must have lost the faith within a generation or two’.⁹² He provided little historical evidence for this assertion and this dissertation will investigate its validity. In the course of her research on the Irish in the Caribbean Nini Rodgers stated that the Irish cultural identity at the turn of the eighteenth century was partly

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ On occasion, the case studies in this dissertation will present tentative connections based on other factors such as community relationships deduced from official documents, like wills, patents and correspondence.

⁹⁰ Hamilton, *Scotland*, pp 23, 48-49.

⁹¹ Trevor Burnard, ‘Harvest Years? Reconfigurations of Empire in Jamaica, 1756-1807’ in *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, xl (2012), pp 533-55.

⁹² Joseph J. Williams, *Whence the ‘black Irish’ of Jamaica* (New York, 1932), p. 73.

based on a collective past related to the reign of James II.⁹³ Both Zacek and Rodgers emphasised how Irishness remained closely linked with Catholicism.⁹⁴ This aspect will be further illustrated in Chapter 2, especially in the context of the 1694 French invasion.

The second aspect that Williams highlighted was the Irish legacy and slavery on the island. He noted that he found a number of Irish names in local directories of what he termed the 'black Irish' of Jamaica.⁹⁵ Williams implied that the Catholic Irish and the enslaved were closely connected, which had resulted in the appearance of their names by the middle of the twentieth century. Unfortunately, he could not find the required historical evidence to support this, which led to the dismissal of this assertion by Orlando Patterson.⁹⁶ Recently, however, Nini Rodgers reassessed the work by Williams, performing her own study of available surnames. She recognised that the identity of the 'black Irish' was difficult to establish in a society based upon racial divisions. Rodgers found some nineteenth-century examples concerning the relationship between the Irish and the African enslaved.⁹⁷ This dissertation will consider the Irish relationship with slavery, especially during the abolitionist period.

The historical discussion presented in this section points towards a complex relationship between the Protestant, Catholic and Dissenter Irish in Jamaica and the white settler society. When Burnard studied the diaries of the English overseer Thomas Thistlewood, he found little mention of the Irish compared to the Scots and Jewish. Burnard noted that 'divisions within white society did exist' and pointed towards 'ethnic divisions'.⁹⁸ However, he did not define these divisions or outline if they had any bearing on the sense of unity. The case studies in this dissertation will illustrate the character of the relationships between the other white settlers and the Protestant, Catholic and Dissenter Irish. By placing

⁹³ Rodgers, *Ireland, slavery and anti-slavery*, p. 59.

⁹⁴ Zacek, *Settler society*, p. 71.

⁹⁵ Williams, *Whence the 'black Irish'*, pp 4-55.

⁹⁶ Orlando Patterson, *The sociology of slavery* (London, 1967), pp 45-48.

⁹⁷ Rodgers, *Ireland, slavery and anti-slavery*, pp 322-24.

⁹⁸ Burnard, *Mastery, tyranny, and desire*, pp 88-89.

the case studies within Jamaican historiography, the Irish presence is considered in light of the unity of the white settlers, relationships with the English and Scottish settlers and aspects of identity. A quantitative survey of the Irish in Jamaica is necessary in order to position them within the white settler society.

IV *Quantification*

This section will outline the rationale behind the estimate of the number of Irish in Jamaica during the long eighteenth century. It will place this within the historiographical discussions around the migration of the Irish in the Americas, which will be followed by an assessment of the Caribbean presence and conclude with the Jamaican estimate. As Trevor Burnard has pointed out, accurate figures for European migration to Jamaica are difficult to establish.⁹⁹ This section aims to provide an indication of the Irish migration to Jamaica in the context of Irish and Jamaican historiography. In addition, it will use the general literature on transatlantic Irish migration during the long eighteenth century. The purpose of the estimate is to facilitate the comparison with the other white settlers in Jamaica.

The question of how many Irish people moved to the Americas in the eighteenth century has generated several estimates. It should be noted that the Protestant, Catholic and Dissenter Irish migrated in different numbers in this period.¹⁰⁰ Louis Cullen concluded that Dissenters were the ‘largest element among European migrants to mainland North America in the eighteenth century’.¹⁰¹ He also emphasised that the Irish migrants were ‘drawn from well-defined compact regions and well-defined groups in society’.¹⁰² Cullen highlighted the complexities of the Irish transatlantic movement when he discussed Ireland and migration in the eighteenth century. He had difficulty in finding reliable figures for the Irish population, which meant that he had to be cautious with his estimates. Using the available material,

⁹⁹ Trevor Burnard, ‘European migration to Jamaica, 1655-1780’ in *The William and Mary Quarterly*, liii (Oct. 1996), pp 769-71.

¹⁰⁰ Cullen, ‘The Irish Diaspora’, pp 113-20.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 113.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 131-32.

Cullen calculated that annually between one and two thousand Irish migrated to North America and the West Indies before 1775. He noted that this was an overall estimate with fluctuations between decades, while he placed a greater emphasis on the Dissenter movement.¹⁰³ A further review of the research by Brian Lambkin and Patrick Fitzgerald confirmed the difference between the province of Ulster and the rest of Ireland. For the period 1700 to 1775, they estimated that between 100,000 and 250,000 Irish people moved to the Americas and highlighted the years 1750 to 1775, when almost one-third of all migrants from Ireland departed from Ulster.¹⁰⁴ A third estimate was provided by the economic historian Thomas Truxes, who arrived at the figure of 150,000 people that moved from Ireland to the Americas in the period 1580 to 1760.¹⁰⁵ Thomas Bartlett surveyed a number of estimates, including those of Truxes, when discussing the Irish in the context of Empire. He presented two aspects to specify his estimate. Firstly, he focused on the Irish in British America and the West Indies. Secondly, he considered the relevant period as between the early colonisation of English-speaking America and the American Revolution over the years 1630 to 1775. Using these criteria, he arrived at the estimate of 165,000 migrants for this period.¹⁰⁶ The next question is how many Irish moved to the West Indies.

In his study on Irish migration, Cullen concluded that the Irish constituted ‘the largest flow of white migrants to the West Indies’ in the seventeenth century.¹⁰⁷ However, he was unable to quantify this in his study beyond ‘a several hundred a year’.¹⁰⁸ In his survey, Thomas Bartlett estimated that from the total figure of 165,000 Irish migrants to British America, around 40,000 people moved to the Caribbean in the period 1630 to 1775, including

¹⁰³ Ibid., 138-40.

¹⁰⁴ Patrick Fitzgerald and Brian Lambkin, *Migration in Irish history, 1607-2007* (Basingstoke, 2008), pp 123-24.

¹⁰⁵ Thomas Truxes, *Irish-American trade*, pp 129-30.

¹⁰⁶ Thomas Bartlett, ‘Ireland, Empire, and Union, 1690-1801’ in Kenny, *Ireland and Empire*, p. 65.

¹⁰⁷ Cullen, ‘The Irish Diaspora’, p. 113.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 126.

around 10,000 convicts.¹⁰⁹ The number of Irish forcibly sent to the West Indies had a seventeenth-century emphasis, and became less significant after 1660.¹¹⁰ A detailed breakdown of the white settler population according to nationality is rarely given in the census material.¹¹¹ This complicates any investigation into more precise figures of the level of Irish migration beyond the estimate presented by Bartlett.

Establishing the number of Irish in Jamaica during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is a speculative exercise.¹¹² As in Ireland, the lack of reliable eighteenth-century records about the population of Jamaica makes it difficult to find precise figures.¹¹³ However, Trevor Burnard has presented a detailed survey of early European migration to the island, where he also evaluated the number of Irish that arrived in Jamaica. Burnard used colonial correspondence, contemporary sources and the militia lists to arrive at the estimates for the white settler population of Jamaica. He surveyed the period 1662 to 1788, when the white population grew from 3,653 to 18,347.¹¹⁴ He suggest an Irish presence under four per cent of the total population by using the militia lists for St Andrew in the period 1680 to 1700 and identifying the Irish names.¹¹⁵ Burnard's method presented several issues. Firstly, the Protestant Irish could not be identified by only considering their names, as they often appeared as English, while the Irish Dissenters could be counted as Scottish.¹¹⁶ Secondly, Burnard excluded the number of 'transients', mostly sailors and traders. With regard to the Irish, this posed a significant problem, as they regularly moved between the islands.¹¹⁷ The third issue was the lack of information concerning Irish Catholics. Burnard pointed towards

¹⁰⁹ Bartlett, 'Ireland, Empire, and Union', p. 65.

¹¹⁰ Truxes, *Irish-American trade*, p. 14

¹¹¹ Except on St Kitts in 1678; see Zacek, *Settler society*, pp 48-51.

¹¹² Burnard, 'European migration', pp 769-96 and Hamilton, *Scotland*, p. 58.

¹¹³ George W. Roberts, *The population of Jamaica* (Cambridge, 1957), pp 2-5.

¹¹⁴ Burnard, 'European migration', p. 772.

¹¹⁵ Catholic Irish who were part of the militia could only enter the lower ranks, to be an officer they had to take the oath of allegiance and supremacy, see Burnard, 'European migration', p. 785.

¹¹⁶ For instance Brodrick, Delap and Lloyd.

¹¹⁷ Burnard, 'European migration', p. 777.

the number of unrecorded deaths of those who left wills in the registers.¹¹⁸ These three issues require further scrutiny to assess the estimate of Irish presence in Jamaica.

As noted, Burnard based his percentage on the militia lists of the parish of St Andrew in the period 1680 to 1700.¹¹⁹ To illustrate the Irish presence, two surveys from the second half of the eighteenth century shed further light on the percentage that Burnard produced. In 1673, Governor Modyford sent the Board of Trade a census that estimated a total of 7,768 white settlers on the island. When Burnard's four per cent is applied to this total, it results in 311 Irish on the island. The Modyford census listed property owners with acreage, the number of associated families and a total estimate per parish. It highlighted how most settlers resided in the parishes of St Andrew and St Catherine.¹²⁰ The latter, for instance, listed the Irish-born John Bourden as one of the Protestant Irish on the island. The Modyford census did not provide any details for St James, St Elizabeth, St George, St Mary and St Anne, except for a total estimate of 1,500 residents.¹²¹ Modyford also estimated that around 2,500 mariners operated out of Jamaica.¹²² In relation to the Irish, the Modyford census presented two difficulties. Firstly, the Irish servants and poor who did not own any acreage did not feature in this list. Secondly, it indicated a significant white settler presence in rural parishes and transients that operated out of the ports, which should be taken into account. In the aftermath of the Port Royal earthquake, Governor William Beeston estimated a total of 7,365 white settlers in 1693.¹²³ When applying Burnard's percentage this would result in 295 Irish on the island. The reduction compared to the 1678 figure can be explained by the Port Royal earthquake, which resulted in a significant loss of life on the island. As the case studies will indicate, the Irish presence on this island spread over the different parishes, beyond St

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 785.

¹¹⁹ Burnard found 55 Irish names among the 1,415 in the militia lists, see *ibid.*, 784-85.

¹²⁰ 'James Modyford census' in *CSP (America & West Indies)* vii, 270 (Sept. 1670).

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ 'State of the Island of Jamaica in the month of September, 1698' in *CSP (America & West Indies)* xvi, 890 ii (Oct. 1698).

Andrew Beeston's survey included the whole of the island, which would become more populated throughout the eighteenth century.

In light of these two examples and the general patterns presented by Cullen in relation to the Irish migration, it can be concluded that Burnard's four per cent is a conservative estimate. He noted that 'sources may under-represent the Irish in the population'.¹²⁴ The lack of specific data on Irish settlers in the West Indies and sources on migration in Ireland makes it difficult to arrive at an exact estimate. However, from the above we can conclude that the Irish formed a small segment of the white settler society compared to the English and Scottish presence. The majority of migrants arrived from England in the seventeenth century, while the Scottish presence increased in the eighteenth century. The relatively small Irish presence resulted in the fragmented nature of the historical evidence.

V Sources

The previous sections on Ireland and Empire, Atlantic history and Jamaican historiography outlined the framework that guided the primary research. This informed the use of case studies to present the individual experiences of the Irish in Jamaica during the long eighteenth century. This enabled the analysis of the colonial experiences of the Protestant, Catholic and Dissenter Irish. The relevant source material for the research on the Irish in Jamaica in the long eighteenth century was consulted in archives in Dublin, London, Kingston and Spanish Town. It ranges from government and estate papers to wills and printed documents and published texts. These were found in the records of the Jamaican Assembly, the individual inventories held at the Jamaican Archives and estate papers and letters held in Dublin and Belfast. The UCL database on slave compensation proved useful in connecting the Irish in Jamaica to property and slave ownership.

¹²⁴ Burnard, 'European migration', p. 781.

The themes outlined in this introduction form the basis for the two chapters on religion and Empire that follow. The aim of these two chapters is to illustrate the presence of the Irish in Jamaica in the context of the white settler society and the structures of Empire. This will link the themes presented in this chapter to specific examples that will inform the case studies. In the second part, a set of individual case studies in each chapter will highlight the experiences of the Irish in Jamaica as found in the primary source material. Chapter 4 will focus on the Catholic Irish at the turn of the eighteenth century. The Protestant Irish lawyers will be studied further in Chapter 5, while the role of the Irish in the eighteenth century plantation economy is further assessed in Chapter 6. The developments around constitutional conflicts and the role of the Irish in the wider context of Empire through trade is examined in Chapter 7. In Chapter 8, the Irish presence in the British army stationed in Jamaica in the early nineteenth century is explored. Finally, the Irish involvement in abolition and slavery on the island features in Chapter 9. A conclusion will assess the findings of the concepts as presented in the dissertation.

This chapter outlines the historiographical context of the Irish presence in Jamaica during the long eighteenth century. It positions the dissertation within discussions on the Irish and Empire, Atlantic history and Jamaican historiography. It provides an estimate of the Irish presence in Jamaica and presents the rationale behind the structure of this thesis. The study of the Protestant, Catholic and Dissenter Irish presence in Jamaica raises questions around identity, mobility and the social context of the white settler society. The case studies will follow the individual approaches by Power and Rodgers. In the next chapter will illustrate the different experiences of the Protestant, Catholic and Dissenter Irish in the context of the white settler society.

2 Religion

This chapter will focus on the Protestant, Catholic and Dissenter Irish presence in Jamaica during the long eighteenth century. Specifically, it will assess the character of their religious affiliation and the levels of restrictions they faced.¹ It will evaluate the different experiences of the three groups linked to their religious backgrounds. The first section will consider the Protestant Irish presence, notably their involvement in the legal profession. The second section will outline the restrictions that the Catholic Irish faced and provides two specific examples. The third section on the Dissenters focuses on the Ulster Presbyterians and their relationship with their Scottish co-religionists. The assessment of these three sections is within the context of the formal religious structures implemented on the island after the conquest of Jamaica was completed in 1660.² Additionally, it will outline the nature of the Catholic and Dissenter religious experience. These aspects will be expanded upon in the case studies, which centre on the individual experiences of the Protestant, Catholic and Dissenter Irish in Jamaica.

I Protestant

The Protestant Irish in Jamaica were aligned to the Anglican Church, which provided them with access to the local government institutions. The London authorities kept a degree of control over local Jamaican government,³ which enabled the Protestant Irish to obtain positions on the island. As Trevor Burnard found in his study on early European settlement in Jamaica, they especially featured in the law profession.⁴ Officially, the religious life of the white settlers revolved around the Anglican Church. It featured in the formalities around

¹ Jeremy Gregory, 'Refashioning puritan New England: The Church of England in British North America, c. 1680-c. 1770' in *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, xx (2010), pp 85-112.

² The Spanish resistance abandoned the island in 1660 after the conclusion of the Anglo-Spanish War, paving the way for a civil government that was implemented by Lord Windsor in 1661, see Francisco Morales Padrón, *Spanish Jamaica* (Kingston, 2003), p. 224.

³ Lauren Benton, 'Colonial law and cultural difference: jurisdictional politics and the formation of the colonial state' in *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, lxi (July, 1999), pp 563-65.

⁴ Trevor Burnard, 'European migration to Jamaica, 1655-1780' in *The William and Mary Quarterly*, liii (Oct. 1996), p. 785.

government and judicial business, while the Bishop of London held the ecclesiastical jurisdiction over Jamaica.⁵ The island parishes and administration of births, baptisms and deaths was central to its organisation. As Ireland was considered a ‘dominion of the English crown’ the Protestant Irish had British citizenship.⁶ It meant they could vote in elections and stand for the assembly provided they were male, over the age of twenty-one and owned property that was taxable above £10.⁷ In contrast, foreigners who had settled on the island were barred from the institutions of local government unless they became naturalised citizens who took the oath of allegiance.⁸ Those that adhered to other religions faced a number of restrictions. For instance, the Jewish and Quakers both were allowed to practise but had to pay higher taxes.⁹ This section will outline two aspects of the Protestant Irish presence in Jamaica. First, it will focus on their role in local government and the link with the legal profession. Second, it provides an assessment of the framework within which the Protestant Irish legal professionals operated, for instance when obtaining the position of attorney general. Both aspects will be illustrated further in the case studies.

The Protestant Irish first became a feature in the local government of Jamaica during the seventeenth century. They included William O’Brien, the second earl of Inchiquin, who became governor of Jamaica in 1690. Inchiquin was largely educated in England, where he entered military service.¹⁰ In Jamaica, he encountered some of his fellow Irishmen, including John Bourden, a plantation owner from the parish of St Catherine who was also an assembly member and magistrate. Bourden eventually was invited to sit on the council and briefly

⁵ William Wilson Manross (ed.), *The Fulham papers in the Lambeth Palace library: American colonial section* (Oxford, 1965), pp xiv-xxi.

⁶ Thomas Hennessey, *Dividing Ireland: World War One and partition* (London, 1998), p. xvii.

⁷ Trevor Burnard, *Mastery, tyranny, and desire: Thomas Thistlewood and his slaves in the Anglo-Jamaican world* (London, 2004) p. 284.

⁸ Edward Long, *History of Jamaica* (3 vols, London, 1779) ii, pp 300-01.

⁹ Carla Gardina Pestana, *Protestant Empire: religion and the making of the British Atlantic World* (Philadelphia, 2011), p. 110.

¹⁰ George H. Guttridge, *The colonial policy of William III in America and the West Indies* (London, 1922), p. 140.

became its president in the aftermath of the 1692 earthquake.¹¹ Although Inchiquin and Bourden were both Anglicans, they had different origins. Bourden was born in 1633 in the town of Coleraine, which was part of the Plantation of Ulster. The O'Brien family had converted to Anglicanism in the sixteenth century and had been strong supporters of the English crown since. These examples highlight the different backgrounds of the Protestant Irish. On occasion, the Protestant Irish who were members of the assembly suffered accusations about their possible conversion from Catholicism. This happened, for instance, to Andrew Arcedeckne, who had arrived on the island as a lawyer and became involved in politics, in the first half of the eighteenth century.¹²

The Protestant Irish found employment in the legal profession, as they were educated in English law. This set them apart from the Scottish, who were educated under a different law system and confronted with several obstacles when they arrived in Jamaica.¹³ The presence of the Protestant Irish lawyers in Jamaica featured in the secondary literature, which described them as troublesome in their political involvement.¹⁴ They constituted the most notable group of settlers from Ireland in Jamaica during the early eighteenth century. Discussions about appointments and conflicts with the Irish lawyer group featured regularly in colonial correspondence with London and local documents. Recent research by Craig Bailey, for instance, has shed further light on the Protestant Irish in Jamaica and their involvement in the legal profession. He specifically highlighted their training in London and

¹¹ The president of the council replaced the governor and lieutenant governor when neither was on the island or deceased; see Karst de Jong, 'The life of John Bourden' in *Irish Migration Studies in Latin America*, viii (2012), pp 87-98.

¹² George Metcalf, *Royal government and political conflict in Jamaica 1729-1783* (London, 1965), p. 93.

¹³ When Scottish lawyers arrived in Jamaica they had to familiarise themselves with English law and serve a five-year apprenticeship before being allowed to practise, these restrictions were removed in 1773; see Alan L. Karras, *Sojourners in the sun, Scottish migrants in Jamaica and the Chesapeake 1740-1800* (London, 1992), pp 60-66.

¹⁴ Trevor Burnard, 'European migration to Jamaica, 1655-1780' in *The William and Mary Quarterly*, lii (1996), pp 784-85.

their transatlantic connections.¹⁵ This dissertation will focus on the character of the group and how some of their behaviour set them apart. Like Bourden and Inchiquin, the Protestant lawyers featured had different social backgrounds, while they all found an opportunity in colonial law in Jamaica. The case studies will further illustrate the involvement of the Protestant Irish in local politics and expand on the individual experiences of the Protestant Irish.

An assessment of the legal system of Jamaica frames the presence of the Protestant Irish in the legal profession. Besides their involvement in law, they also used aspects of colonial governance, such as letters patent, to gain legal positions. In 1661, Lord Windsor implemented civil government structures that formally established Jamaica as a colony, through a royal proclamation by Charles II.¹⁶ While colonial law in Jamaica was largely based on the English system, the proclamation omitted any reference to the laws of England.¹⁷ Windsor introduced five different types of court on the island, which replaced military justice. The most important was the Grand Court, which was convened three times a year to deal with the most serious civil and criminal cases. It was presided over by the chief justice, one of the key positions on the island. Additionally, there was a Court of Chancery, Vice-Admiralty Court, and a Court of Errors, while each parish had a Court of Common Pleas.¹⁸ The Protestant Irish who were involved in the legal profession featured as clerks, magistrates, judges and lawyers of these courts throughout the long eighteenth century.

¹⁵ Craig Bailey, *Irish London, middleclass migration in the global eighteenth century* (Liverpool, 2013), pp 19-21.

¹⁶ 'Proclamation for the encouragement of planters in Jamaica' in *CSP (America & West Indies)* v, 195 (Dec. 1661).

¹⁷ As Jamaica was an English conquest, it required a royal proclamation to establish the political and legal system in the colony. And while the Council for Foreign Plantations did suggest inserting a section on the laws of England, the King and his advisors disregarded it. This ambiguity continued until the 1720s when it was partially clarified by the attorney general in London; see Agnes Whitson, *The constitutional development of Jamaica 1660-1729* (Manchester, 1929), pp 14-17.

¹⁸ The governor presided over the Court of Chancery, which dealt mostly with issues of property, and in the Court of Ordinary, which dealt with disputes over wills. The Vice-Admiralty Court dealt with maritime matters independently. Misdemeanours and offences were heard at the Court of Common Pleas. The Court of Errors,

Some of the Protestant Irish also made use of the system of colonial appointments that provided entry into local government, especially the posts of attorney general. These were provided under letters patent and issued by the Board of Trade in London.¹⁹ There were only a small number of people who had the required connections and purchasing power to obtain the patents in London. Many of the patent holders did not have any intention of going to the Caribbean, but delegated their responsibilities to others instead.²⁰ Some held several patents, which invariably led to conflicts of interest. This practice was in effect unavoidable, as the pool of suitable candidates was small and the death rate in the Caribbean high.²¹ As the case study of William Brodrick in Chapter 5 will outline, these positions had considerable political influence attached to them. The governor often made recommendations, but the Board of Trade did not always follow these suggestions, relying instead on political and family connections.²² The delays and communication problems resulted in official positions left vacant, forcing the governor to make temporary appointments until the status of the patent was clarified.²³

The law system in Jamaica enabled several of the Protestant Irish to embark on a legal career. In addition, colonial governance provided the opportunity to obtain letters patent or to move to Jamaica under contract of the patent holder. The Protestant Irish attached to the Anglican Church in Jamaica continued to feature in both local government and the legal profession throughout the long eighteenth century.

composed of the governor and some council members, dealt with appeals from the Common Pleas; see Metcalf, *Royal government*, pp 25-26.

¹⁹ The Board of Trade was a committee of the Privy Council, which concerned itself with the administration of the colonies; see Jacob M. Price, 'Who cared about the colonies? The impact of the thirteen colonies on British society and politics, circa 1714-1775' in Bernard Bailyn and Philip D. Morgan (eds) *Strangers within the realm: cultural margins of the first British Empire* (Chapel Hill, 1991), p. 400.

²⁰ Ian K. Steele, 'The anointed, the appointed, and the elected: governance of the British Empire' in Elaine M. Low and P. J. Marshall (eds), *The Oxford history of the British Empire: the eighteenth century* (Oxford, 1998), p. 117.

²¹ John H. Parry, 'The patent offices in the British West Indies' in *English Historical Review*, lxi (1954), pp 200-25.

²² Jack. P. Greene, *Creating the British Atlantic: essays on transplantation, adaptation, and continuity* (Charlottesville, 2013), pp 124-26.

²³ To qualify for certain positions, such as attorney general, or be able to sit in the assembly, the nominee had to be a freeholder. Patents also referred to land holdings, but those were issued locally.

II Catholic

The study of the Catholic Irish presence in Jamaica presents a number of difficulties. Firstly, anyone outside of the official church structure was less likely to be recorded in the parish administration.²⁴ Secondly, in the early eighteenth century Irish Catholics in Jamaica were viewed with a degree of suspicion due to ongoing wars with the French and Spanish. In this section two examples will be presented that illustrate these two issues. The aforementioned oaths prevented the Catholic Irish from participating in official civic life on the island. They were, for instance, excluded from the assembly, as taking a seat required the swearing of oaths. The oath of supremacy in particular caused a significant problem, as they could not recognise the King of England as the head of the church.²⁵ Similarly, they could not become officers in the militia, as it required swearing the same oath. There were no legal obstacles that prevented Catholics from obtaining property and those with a taxable income above £10 were also allowed to vote.²⁶ While these formal structures restricted the Catholic Irish, at times of war the other white settlers believed that the Catholics on the island would side with their French co-religionists.

The tense relationship between the Catholic Irish and the other white settlers became a feature in Jamaica during the latter part of the seventeenth century.²⁷ The degree of mistrust became a feature during the Nine Years War (1688-97). There was further testimony of this sentiment when the assembly introduced ‘an act to prevent the growth of popery in this island’, which attempted to implement restrictions on those of the Catholic faith. Although this piece of legislation was later rejected as unworkable by the London government, it did

²⁴ Keith Hunte, ‘Protestantism and slavery in the British Caribbean’ in Armando Lampe (ed.), *Christianity in the Caribbean: essays on church history* (Kingston, 2001), pp 86-92.

²⁵ The oath of supremacy presented the most difficulties as the King was presented as the head of the church as opposed to the Pope; see Johann P. Sommerville, ‘Papalist political thought and controversy over the Jacobean oath of allegiance’ in Ethan H. Shagan, *Catholics and the ‘Protestant Nation’: religious politics and identity in early modern England* (Manchester, 2005), pp 163-77.

²⁶ Burnard, *Mastery, tyranny, and desire*, p. 284.

²⁷ Natalie Zacek, *Settler society in the English Leeward Islands 1670-1776* (Cambridge, 2010), pp 67-68.

reveal the level of suspicion that was present on the island.²⁸ This sentiment can be partly explained by two events: a brief period of religious toleration under the duke of Albemarle and the French invasion of 1694. The governorship of the duke of Albemarle briefly highlighted the Catholic Irish presence in Jamaica in the period in 1685 to 1687. After his ascension to the throne, James II set out on implementing a policy of religious toleration. Newly appointed governors were given instructions to this effect. Although the Spanish had established the Catholic Church in Jamaica, it was abolished after the English conquest.²⁹ Concealing their religion was something a number of Catholic Irish already practised in the country of their birth, which made it easier for them to blend in. Other restrictions, especially with regard to the oaths, remained in place. For the Catholic Irish, the Albemarle period provided the opportunity to practise their religion openly in Jamaica.

Albemarle was accompanied by the English priest Churchill, who consecrated a chapel in Spanish Town. Previously the congregation had been gathering at the house of the Spanish-born merchant James de Castillo in Port Royal and he objected to Churchill's chapel. However, a conflict over the building of a permanent church meant that Catholics would not have a formal place of worship. From the research by Osborne it can be concluded that Castillo's Catholic chapel was tolerated by the authorities prior to Albemarle's arrival. It revealed how the Catholic Irish informally practised their religion. However, the exact number of Catholics on the island in the 1680s remained difficult to establish. A number signed a petition thanking the duke of Albemarle and they included John Stapleton and Redmond M'Rough.³⁰ Both men will feature in the case studies presented in Chapter 4. The

²⁸ JAJ, i, 387.

²⁹ Johannes Meier, 'The beginnings of the Catholic church in the Caribbean' in Lampe (ed.), *Christianity in the Caribbean* (Kingston, 2001), pp 1-2; Padrón, *Spanish Jamaica*, p. 105.

³⁰ The names included, besides the 'chief pastor' Thomas Churchill: John Jones, Francis Thomas, Redmond M'Rough, William Linwood, Bryan M'Grah, James Wate, John Stapleton, George Pigot, Edward Anthill, Richard Morton, William Worley and James Lispenass; see Anon., 'An address of the Catholics in Jamaica to the duke of Albemarle' in *Interesting tracts, relating to the island of Jamaica* (Spanish Town, 1800), pp 214-15.

period of Catholic toleration ended with the death of Albemarle and the event of the Glorious Revolution back in England.

After the 1692 earthquake that devastated Port Royal, William Beeston was appointed as lieutenant governor of Jamaica.³¹ The demise of James II and the Nine Years War (1688-97) created a degree of difficulty for the Irish Catholics in the region, as war with the French increased the levels of suspicion.³² The attack on Jamaica by the French commander Du Casse in 1694³³ was the beginning of a period of considerable difficulty for the Catholic Irish. As the war between France and England escalated, an attack on Jamaica was expected. During the summer of 1694 tensions were rising and Beeston noted that ‘some Roman Catholic by religion, some of the Irish nation, some much inclined to think they were obliged that way to serve king James, and others through dissatisfaction, and being in debt, ran away to them’.³⁴ As an attack was imminent, Beeston started to make preparations. He declared martial law and began arming the militia. Many expected the French to land near the main settlements around Kingston. With these events, the level of suspicion increased and on 7 July 1694 Beeston related how ‘two days since four or five armed Irish with us contrived to run away to them [the French], but the plot was betrayed by one of them, and the ringleader tried by court martial and executed’.³⁵ When the expected attack came, the French leader, Du Casse, landed at Port Morant, and ventured further along the coast. While the Jamaican

³¹ Nuala Zahedieh, ‘The merchants of Port Royal, Jamaica, and the Spanish contraband trade, 1655-1692’ in *William and Mary Quarterly*, xliii (1986), pp 570-72; P. B. Austin, ‘Beeston, Sir William (1636-1702)’, rev. Nuala Zahedieh in *Oxford dictionary of national biography* (Oxford, 2004). (<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/1955>) (6 Oct. 2015).

³² In 1689, the religious tensions in the region escalated in the Leeward Islands, when the Catholic Irish sided with the French on St Kitts. This island had been divided between the English and French and during the Nine Years War both attempted to conquer the whole island. The French, with the assistance of the Catholic Irish, managed to briefly expel the English. These events led to a blanket ban on any Catholic Church service on the Leeward Islands, which would not be lifted until the middle of the eighteenth century. See Zacek, *Settler society*, pp 42-45, 92-94.

³³ Jean-Baptiste Du Casse (1646-1715) came from a merchant family and had taken part in the attack on St Kitts in 1689. He was appointed governor of the French settlement of St Domingue (present-day Haiti) in 1691 that was recognised in 1697 after the Treaty of Ryswick, see James Pritchard, *In search of Empire: the French in the Americas, 1670-1730* (Cambridge, 2004), pp 315-18.

³⁴ *Interesting tracts*, p. 249.

³⁵ *CSP (America and the West Indies)* xiv, 1,131 (July 1694).

militia was small in number and unable to defend the plantations, they did manage to prevent the ransacking of Port Royal and Spanish Town. The French carried off around 300 enslaved, but also suffered significant losses to disease and casualties. After two weeks, they were forced to return to St Domingue. The real price that the Jamaicans paid was the destruction of the estates in the parish of St Andrew, where sugar production was first developed on the island. For the French the assault in Jamaica was nothing more than an opportunity to plunder.³⁶ Du Casse had never intended to conquer the island, his aim was to eliminate the privateering competition.³⁷

What was a minor plundering expedition to Du Casse had greater consequences for Jamaica, and Irish Catholics in particular. After the French invasion, tensions remained high and when the assembly sat in May 1696, Beeston made direct reference to the continuing threat.³⁸ The Catholic Irish had little to gain from a French invasion, as their commercial interests required stability in the region. In July of the same year the assembly entered a very strongly worded anti-Catholic message in the minutes in response to the Jacobite assassination plot in England.³⁹ It illustrated the degree of hostility that the Irish Catholics on the island faced. The restrictions imposed through the oaths and the events of the French invasion highlight two difficult circumstances that the Catholic Irish faced.

The Roman Catholic Church was re-established on the island in the 1790s, when the island became a destination for French refugees and Spanish merchants. They largely congregated in the Kingston area and were joined by the Irish Catholics.⁴⁰ While the authorities were hesitant to sanction the building of a Catholic Church in Jamaica, they

³⁶ David Buisseret, 'The French invasion of Jamaica, 1694' in *Jamaica Journal*, xvi (1983), pp 31-33.

³⁷ John D. Garrigus, *Before Haiti: race and citizenship in French Saint-Domingue* (Basingstoke, 2006), pp 21-31.

³⁸ *JAJ*, i, 158

³⁹ It stated: 'Whereas there has been a horrid and detestable conspiracy, formed and carried on by Papists and other wicked and traitorous persons for assassinating his majesty's royal person, in order to encourage an invasion from France' (ibid., 169).

⁴⁰ Donald H. Akenson, *The Irish diaspora: a primer* (Toronto, 1993), pp 142-44.

appeared to be willing to accept a dwelling in Kingston being used for Mass. This had a precedent from the time of James de Castillo, who had a similar arrangement in his Port Royal residence in the 1670s.⁴¹ In 1792 the Irish Franciscan priest Anthony Quigly arrived and he chose a residence close to Kingston Harbour as the church.⁴² It ended the unofficial character of the Catholic presence that had been a feature throughout the eighteenth century.⁴³

III *Dissenter*

This section will outline how the Irish dissenters were positioned within the white settler society, notably in relation to the Scottish on the island. Two questions arise when outlining their presence in eighteenth-century Jamaica. Firstly, did they gravitate towards their Scottish co-religionists, who formed a large proportion of the white settler population in Jamaica? This created a difficulty in distinguishing the Irish Dissenters from the Scots. Secondly, although they were formally outside of the Anglican church, the Dissenters faced few restrictions. It raises the question of the distinctiveness of the Irish Dissenters in the context of white settler unity and in their relationships with the other Irish in Jamaica.⁴⁴ As Rodgers and Power found, the Irish Dissenter presence in the Caribbean had a mercantile emphasis.⁴⁵ First this section will outline the position of the Dissenters within the white settler society, which is followed by an outline of the Presbyterian presence in Jamaica and the restrictions that they faced in the eighteenth century.

In the eighteenth century, Irish Dissenters forged connections with the West Indies through mercantile links, especially the linen trade.⁴⁶ With the migration of the Ulster

⁴¹ Francis Osborne, *History of the Catholic Church in Jamaica* (Chicago, 1988) pp 138-40.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 144.

⁴³ In 1866 2,000 Catholics were registered; see John B. Ellis, *The diocese of Jamaica* (London, 1913), pp 104-05.

⁴⁴ Ennis B. Edmonds and Michelle A. Gonzalez, *Caribbean religious history: an introduction* (New York 2010), p. 77.

⁴⁵ Nini Rodgers, *Ireland, slavery and anti-slavery (1645-1865)* (Basingstoke, 2007), pp 145-51.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

Presbyterians to British America, especially the northern colonies, they developed connections with the Caribbean.⁴⁷ They arrived in Jamaica through family connections and as business opportunities arose.⁴⁸ Many of their Scottish co-religionists had moved to the island after the Darien disaster of 1700. The Scots brought with them the social structures and connections that assisted further migration to Jamaica; it created a network around the Atlantic based on kinship and sustained by trade.⁴⁹ From the outset, the Scottish presence was concentrated in the western side of the island, especially in the parishes of St Elizabeth, Hanover and Westmoreland.⁵⁰ This poses questions concerning the relationship between the Scottish and Irish dissenters in Jamaica and a possible link between Ulster, Scotland and the West Indies.

Previous research by Rodgers found several Belfast-based merchants who developed mercantile connections with North America and the West Indies. They included the Greg Cunningham partnership, which also developed links with the West Indies. She also found connections with Donegal, especially with the aforementioned Delap family who developed links with Jamaica.⁵¹ Similarly, Scottish traders used their connections in the West Indies to enter the supply trade after 1707. Several trading houses in Glasgow and Edinburgh developed connections with Jamaica, where Scottish agents maintained the network.⁵² The dissertation will consider if the Irish Dissenters made use of these Scottish connections as they were developing the trade with the West Indies. It will also investigate if trading partnerships, such as Gregg Cunningham, used the link between Scotland and the West Indies to develop a mercantile interest in Jamaica from Ireland.

⁴⁷ Patrick Griffin, *The people with no name: Ireland's Ulster Scots, America's Scots Irish, and the creation of a British Atlantic world, 1689-1764* (Oxford, 2001), pp 1-8.

⁴⁸ Boyd Stanley Schlenker, 'Religious faith and commercial Empire' in Elaine M. Low and P. J. Marshall (eds), *The Oxford History of the British Empire: the eighteenth century* (Oxford, 1998), p. 139.

⁴⁹ Douglas Hamilton, *Scotland, the Caribbean and the Atlantic World, 1750-1820* (Manchester, 2005), pp 4-6.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 55-60.

⁵¹ Rodgers, *Ireland, slavery and anti-slavery*, pp 145-58.

⁵² Hamilton, *Scotland*, pp 85-87.

Unlike the Catholic Irish, formal restrictions did not apply to the Irish Dissenters. Since the 1660s, the West Indian authorities had been discouraged from implementing the Test Act with much vigour.⁵³ There remained a chronic shortage of whites in Jamaica, something that the assembly continuously tried to rectify.⁵⁴ The metropolitan authorities emphasised the aspect of loyalty to the crown in the colonies. This was largely to encourage further settlement of the English-speaking Caribbean.⁵⁵ However, the authorities remained keen to restrict access to official positions through informal barriers, and left clerical jobs and other minor positions to be filled by non-Anglicans; as, for instance, was demonstrated by the five-year apprenticeship that Scottish lawyers had to fulfil before being able to practise. The Jamaican assembly implemented the Act of Toleration (1689), which accorded Presbyterians the freedom of worship. The Act did include a provision that they had to swear the act of allegiance and supremacy, which generally did not pose any significant issues.⁵⁶ However, when the oath of abjuration was introduced in 1707, it prevented Jacobites from entering official positions.⁵⁷ The case study of the Delap brothers in Chapter 7 will illustrate how the Irish Dissenters featured in local government and how they were viewed by the other white settlers.

In Ireland, the Presbyterians had developed a separate identity in the seventeenth century, which was supported by the church structures in Scotland.⁵⁸ In Jamaica, there is no evidence that the Irish Dissenters attempted to create their own church. Instead, they formed links with the Scottish settlers with whom they shared a religious background. The Presbyterian congregation established a Kirk in Kingston in 1815, after petitioning the

⁵³ The Test Act was part of the English Penal Laws system that prevented non Anglicans from obtaining public positions; see Paul Finkelman (ed.), *Religion and American law: an encyclopaedia* (London, 2000), pp 67-68.

⁵⁴ *JAJ*, i, 317.

⁵⁵ Hunte, 'Protestantism and slavery', p. 90.

⁵⁶ Thomas Bartlett, *The fall and rise of the Irish nation: the Catholic question, 1690-1830* (Dublin, 1992), pp 31-32.

⁵⁷ Alexander Aikman, *Laws of Jamaica* (2 vols, Kingston, 1802), p. 45.

⁵⁸ Andrew R. Holmes, 'Presbyterian religion, historiography, and Ulster Scots identity, c. 1800 to 1914' in *The Historical Journal*, lii (Sept., 2009), pp 615-16.

governor and assembly.⁵⁹ The Scots formed a substantial part of the white settlers in Jamaica, and opened their social structures to outsiders.⁶⁰ This raises the question of whether the Irish Dissenters were considered part of the Scottish settlers on the island, and, if so, how this changed their relationship with the Protestant and Catholic Irish in Jamaica. The case studies will consider Irish Dissenters in Jamaica as they featured in the trade and local government.

This chapter illustrates the context of the Protestant, Catholic and Dissenter Irish presence in Jamaica in relation to the white settler society. It outlines how religion featured in the Irish colonial experience. As Anglicans, the Protestant Irish featured in the legal profession and the local government of Jamaica. In contrast, Catholic Irish faced increased restrictions at the turn of the eighteenth century. The implementation of the oaths restricted them in civil life, while the 1694 French invasion made the white settler community hostile towards them. The presence of de Castillo's chapel illustrated the informal nature of their religious life. The Irish Dissenters were linked with the Scottish Presbyterians and faced informal restrictions during the eighteenth century. They featured in the transatlantic trade and in government. This chapter demonstrates how the colonial experiences of the Protestant, Catholic and Dissenter Irish in Jamaica related to their religious affiliation and their place in the white settler society. These aspects continued to play a role when considering the wider context of the British Empire, which is discussed in the next chapter.

⁵⁹ George W. Bridges, *The annals of Jamaica* (2 vols, London, 1828) ii, p. 350.

⁶⁰ Hamilton, *Scotland*, p. 5; Karras, *Sojourners in the sun*, p. 177.

3 Empire

This chapter will consider the Protestant, Catholic and Dissenter Irish presence in Jamaica in the period 1750 to 1834 in the context of Empire. Specifically, it will present three areas of research that highlight the impact of imperial relations.¹ Firstly, it will consider the effect of the metropolitan involvement in local Jamaican politics, which featured Irish lawmakers and officials. Their participation will be illustrated by discussing two controversies in local government in the period 1750 to 1770. Secondly, the chapter will outline the effect of the imperial structures on the Irish in Jamaica in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. This will be illustrated by an assessment of the Irish military presence on the island during the Haitian Revolution. Thirdly, it will outline the relationship between the Irish in Jamaica and slavery. It will consider their involvement in the plantation economy and the impact of the period of abolition from 1823 to 1838. This chapter will discuss the effect of Empire to illustrate the research questions outlined in Chapter 1.

The three areas of research outlined above feature in the three sections of this chapter. The first will discuss the Spanish Town and Privilege controversies and how the mechanism of colonial government in Ireland, known as Poynings' Law, served as an example to the imperial government.² The second section on the Haitian Revolution will outline the temporary character of the Irish military presence, including the connection with the French army. It will also discuss the Protestant Irish officers who featured in local government as government officials. The third section will discuss the Irish involvement in the plantation economy and trade. In addition it will discuss the Irish presence in relation to the abolitionist movement and in the context of white unity in the first half of the nineteenth century. The

¹ Metropolitan in this case refers to the imperial government in London involved in colonial affairs, see Peter J. Marshall, *The making and unmaking of empires: Britain, India, and America c.1750-1783* (Oxford, 2005), pp 78-80.

² James Kelly, *Poynings' Law and the making of law in Ireland, 1660-1800* (Dublin, 2007), p. 48.

case studies will further explore the individual experiences of the Irish in Jamaica and Empire.

I Political conflict

This section will outline the involvement of the London government in the political conflicts in Jamaica that concerned Irish lawmakers and officials. It will also discuss how the model of colonial governance in Ireland featured in the discussions concerning Jamaica and metropolitan control. The political conflicts in Jamaica in the period 1750 to 1770 centred on the independence of the local legislature.³ The two examples highlighted in this section are the Spanish Town conflict and the Privilege Controversy. Both featured members of the Jamaican assembly resisting the interventions made by the governor and the colonial authorities in London. The rights and privileges of the Jamaican assembly were modelled on those of the House of Commons. They had been granted to white settlers of Jamaica back in the seventeenth century under the royal proclamation of 1661.⁴ During the first half of the eighteenth century the colonial government in London rarely intervened in Jamaican affairs, while British colonial policy lacked coherence and was perceived as bureaucratic and ineffective.⁵

When the Earl of Halifax became president of the Board of Trade in 1748, he began to reinforce imperial authority in the British colonies. Halifax attempted to curtail the influence of the colonial assemblies and give more power to the governors.⁶ The period also featured an increased interest from the Westminster parliament, which ordered an inquiry into the situation in Jamaica in 1752. The subsequent report resulted in a bill, with the aim to improve the white settler situation on the island. While the bill was never enacted, it set a

³ George Metcalf, *Royal government and political conflict in Jamaica 1729-1783* (London 1965), p. 80.

⁴ Agnes Whitson, *The constitutional development of Jamaica 1660-1729* (Manchester, 1929), pp 9-12.

⁵ Marshall, *The making and unmaking of Empires*, pp 74-75.

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp 75-78.

new precedent of intervention and debate in Westminster concerning Jamaica.⁷ This formed the background to the Irish involvement in the two Jamaican constitutional conflicts outlined below.

The political conflicts in Jamaica during the period 1750 to 1770 included Protestant Irish members of the assembly and government officials. While the royal proclamation of 1661 restricted the efforts of the Board of Trade in establishing colonial control, the Board did appoint the governor of Jamaica. He could veto legislation and call martial law, but had to consult the council.⁸ The royal proclamation also facilitated the election of a legislative assembly, which could generate legislation and hold hearings.⁹ The governor summoned and adjourned the assembly, but was unable to interfere with its business. The assembly held power over local revenue and passed a bill for this purpose on a yearly basis.¹⁰ Bills were submitted to the governor, who enacted them into law. He was obliged to send them to the Board of Trade in London for approval, while the acts remained on the Jamaican statute books for two years. This was different to the system in Ireland, where draft bills were sent to the Privy Council in London, who could amend them. Upon return, the Irish Parliament could then either accept or reject it, before the bill became law.¹¹ The Jamaican structure of colonial government generated several conflicts between the governor and the assembly during the eighteenth century, especially over revenue. These conflicts involved the Protestant Irish both as elected representatives and as government officials. They included, for instance, the attorney general Matthew Concanen, who regularly opposed the local government in the assembly in the 1730s and 1740s.¹² With the increased scrutiny of Jamaican affairs by the

⁷ Ibid., pp 78-80.

⁸ In practice, the governor rarely vetoed legislation as it would delay the revenue bill; see Jack P. Greene, *Creating the British Atlantic: essays on transplantation, adaptation, and continuity* (London, 2013), p. 144.

⁹ Whitson, *The constitutional development of Jamaica*, pp 11-12.

¹⁰ Helen Taft Manning, *British government after the American Revolution (1782-1820)* (London, 1933), pp 96-120.

¹¹ Toby Barnard, *The kingdom of Ireland, 1641-1760* (Basingstoke, 2004), pp 45-47.

¹² Metcalf, *Royal government*, pp 81-89.

Board of Trade, the local political conflicts of the island became part of the wider issue of metropolitan control.¹³

In the period 1750 to 1770, two conflicts concerning colonial control involved the local assembly, the metropolitan power and the governor. The first, the Spanish Town controversy, concerned a power struggle between Governor Charles Knowles and the assembly from 1754 to 1756.¹⁴ Without consulting the assembly, the governor moved the seat of government from Spanish Town to Kingston. The controversy split the political elite of the island into two camps, where the merchants supported the move and the leading planters opposed the governor. The conflict led to direct involvement from the Board of Trade in London. The governor was recalled and Spanish Town was reinstated as the centre of government.¹⁵ The event poses questions about how the Protestant Irish, such as Robert Arcedeckne, who were involved in the conflict, viewed the imperial interference. In addition, it queries how the Irish officials, like the provost marshal Francis Delap, used imperial links to gather support during the conflict. The Spanish Town controversy and the roles of Robert Arcedeckne and Francis Delap will be outlined further in the case studies presented in Chapter 7.

The second conflict concerned the Privilege Controversy (1764-66). It featured a disagreement over the rights and privileges of the assembly.¹⁶ During the 1764 session, government officials confiscated property belonging to a member of the assembly, Mr Olyphant. The governor, William Lyttleton, supported the government officials in their

¹³ Jack P. Greene, 'Edward Trelawny's "grand elixir": metropolitan weakness and constitutional reform in the mid-eighteenth century British Empire' in Roderick A. McDonald (ed.), *West Indies accounts, essays on the history of the British Caribbean and the Atlantic economy* (Kingston, 1996), p. 87.

¹⁴ J. K. Laughton, 'Knowles, Sir Charles, first baronet (d. 1777)', rev. Richard Harding, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/15765>) (11 Aug. 2014).

¹⁵ Metcalf, *Royal government*, pp 126-35.

¹⁶ Sarah Yeh, 'Colonial identity and revolutionary loyalty: the case of the West Indies' in Stephen Foster (ed.), *British North America in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries* (Oxford, 2013), p. 210-11.

actions, while the assembly accused him of an abuse of power.¹⁷ In the eighteenth century, these conflicts had been local in character, but on this occasion the assembly turned to the London political establishment to argue their case.¹⁸ This involved a member of the extended Arcedeckne family, Nicholas Bourke, who wrote a pamphlet that was published in England and Jamaica.¹⁹ That Bourke's writings appeared in London indicated the extent of the imperial interest in Jamaican affairs. Bourke's arguments presented in the pamphlet illustrated the relationship of the Protestant Irish in relation to Empire, which will be addressed in the case study. The two examples presented above demonstrated that the imperial power in London and the governor had limited options at their disposal in controlling the assembly.²⁰ The case studies in Chapter 7 will consider the role of the Irish in these two conflicts further, especially in relation to the political involvement of the metropole.

The two controversies illustrated the increased level of interest of the metropolitan authorities in Jamaica, especially around the issue of colonial oversight.²¹ When considering possible options, the mechanism that administered British control over the government in Ireland provided a guide.²² The Board of Trade attempted to assert its authority in 1678 by insisting that the bills from Jamaica be passed in accordance with the same principles as set out in Poynings' Law. After protests by the assembly members, the governor, the Earl of Carlisle, had to withdraw the proposals to implement this mechanism of colonial control.²³ A century later, the episode remained a feature of local politics. In his pamphlet Nicholas

¹⁷ Jack P. Greene, 'The Jamaica privilege controversy, 1764-1766: an episode in the process of constitutional definition in the early modern British Empire' in *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, xxii (1994), pp 16-20.

¹⁸ Yeh, 'Colonial identity', p. 210.

¹⁹ It was published anonymously, but later attributed to Bourke; see Greene, 'Privilege controversy', pp 31-32.

²⁰ Metcalf, *Royal government*, pp 19-20.

²¹ Marshall, *The making and unmaking of Empires*, pp 79-80.

²² Thomas Bartlett, 'This famous island set in a Virginian sea': Ireland in the British Empire, 1690-1801' in Alaine M. Low and P. J. Marshall (eds), *The Oxford history of the British Empire: the eighteenth century* (Oxford, 1998), pp 261-62.

²³ Vicki Crow Via, 'Colonial laws of Jamaica under Governor Thomas Lynch' in *Journal of Caribbean History*, xxix (2005), pp 236-48.

Bourke referred to the Windsor episode, and Poynings' Law in particular.²⁴ As the London government developed an interest in the affairs of Jamaica in the 1750s, colonial officials began to receive a number of suggestions about strengthening the position of the executive power.²⁵

The Jamaican governor, Edward Trelawny,²⁶ proposed a change to the local government in Jamaica that contained elements of control, similar to the system in Ireland. He sent two letters to prime minister Henry Pelham in April 1749, where he suggested introducing a degree of colonial oversight. As the long-serving governor of the island, Trelawny often found himself positioned between the assembly and the metropolitan government.²⁷ His difficulties with the assembly generally concerned issues of revenue. Trelawny suggested that Pelham should introduce a structural reform of the colonial system of governance. Specifically, he argued that London should remove tax-raising powers from the local assembly and that an Act of Parliament would supply annual revenue to Jamaica.²⁸ In Ireland, Charles II had been granted annual hereditary revenue raised for public expenditure, while the Irish parliament could vote on supplemental taxes.²⁹ Trelawny's suggestions were not acted upon, as the assembly would obstruct its implementation. The period 1750 to 1770 highlighted the presence of the Protestant Irish, notably the Arcedeckne family, and the role they played in local politics. The case studies illustrate the question of how their experience of colonial governance in Ireland influenced their behaviour in local politics in Jamaica.

²⁴ Jack P. Greene, 'Introduction: Empire and liberty' in idem (ed.), *Exclusionary Empire: English liberty overseas 1600-1900* (Cambridge, 2010), pp 1-24.

²⁵ Greene, 'Edward Trelawny's "grand elixir"', pp 87-100.

²⁶ Edward Trelawny was governor from 1738 to 1752 (not to be confused with his cousin William Trelawny, who was governor from 1768 to 1772); see Kenneth Morgan, 'Trelawny, Edward (bap. 1699, d. 1754)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/27686>) (11 Aug. 2014).

²⁷ Joseph W. Herbert, 'Constitutional Struggles in Jamaica, 1748-1776' (M.A. thesis, London University, 1927), pp 7-22; Metcalf, *Royal government*, pp 231-233.

²⁸ Greene, 'Edward Trelawny's "grand elixir"', pp 87-100.

²⁹ Burnard, *Kingdom of Ireland*, p. 48.

II *The Irish in Jamaica within the structures of Empire*

This section will consider the effect of the imperial structures on the Protestant, Catholic and Dissenter Irish in Jamaica. This will be illustrated by focusing on military presence during the Haitian Revolution (1791-1804), when the Irish featured in the British and French armies.³⁰ In this period, the character of the island changed, as it became the focus of military operations in the Caribbean, while the army also provided protection of the island.³¹ It brought the Protestant, Catholic and Dissenter Irish soldiers and officers to Jamaica on a temporary stay. The British army had gradually changed its admission policy in the 1770s and the Catholic Irish were able to join, while the Protestant Irish continued to serve as officers.³² Additionally, the Catholic Irish featured in the French army that was involved in the suppression of the Haitian Revolution. This section will first outline the context of the presence of Irish soldiers in Jamaica and secondly consider their involvement in both the British and French armies during the Haitian Revolution. The chapter will illustrate the adaptability of the Irish and poses the question of how the imperial structures facilitated the increased Irish presence on the island. It will consider the nature of the presence of the Irish soldiers, which provided a different colonial experience compared to those that had settled on the island.

The Haitian Revolution caused a degree of instability in Jamaica, where there was fear of an uprising of the enslaved.³³ The increased army presence coincided with the arrival of refugees on the island, which included a number of Irish who had enlisted with the French army. As a consequence, the number of Catholics on the island increased considerably, which

³⁰ John D. Grainger, *The battle of Yorktown, 1781: a reassessment* (Woodbridge, 2005), pp 21-23; Robert Neil McLarty, 'Jamaica prepares for invasion, 1779' in *Caribbean Quarterly*, iv (January, 1955), pp 62-67.

³¹ Andrew J. O'Shaughnessy, *An Empire divided: the American Revolution and the British Caribbean* (Philadelphia, 2000), pp 42-50.

³² It was not until the 1770s that Irish Catholics were officially allowed into the British Army and Irish regiments were beginning to be established. See A. J. Guy, 'The Irish military establishment' in Thomas Bartlett and Keith Jeffery (eds), *A military history of Ireland* (Cambridge, 1996), p. 229; and R. E. Burns, 'The Catholic Relief Act in Ireland, 1778' in *Church History*, xxxii (1963), pp 181-206.

³³ Trevor Burnard and John Garrigus, *The plantation machine: Atlantic capitalism in French Saint-Domingue and British Jamaica* (Philadelphia, 2016), pp 137-38.

poses questions about the change in religious life in this period.³⁴ The Protestant Irish continued to feature as government officials and as British army officers in the nineteenth century. They included for instance the Irish-born George Nugent, who became governor of the island in 1801 and brought a large contingent of Irish soldiers over with him. This poses questions about the effect of Empire, where regiments raised in Ireland were shipped overseas, and the health issues related to a posting in Jamaica.

Early in the eighteenth century the British army was only a feature in Jamaica at times of war, such as the War of Jenkins Ear (1739-48) and the Seven Years War (1754-63). This changed in the Revolutionary period of 1770 to 1814, when the settlers feared a French invasion or an uprising modelled on the Haitian Revolution. The sustained military presence in Jamaica featured a number of Irish regiments that included a number of Catholic recruits.³⁵ The British army traditionally had a Protestant Irish presence among their officer ranks, who generally purchased a position.³⁶ The Catholic Irish that had been recruited were sent overseas to avoid disquiet in Ireland.³⁷ In the Caribbean, the Irish also featured as commanding officers in the West India Regiments, which had been formed by the London government to strengthen the defence of the British islands from 1795 onwards.³⁸ The regiments created a degree of controversy, as they consisted of Afro-Caribbean recruits, while the officers were white. In Jamaica, the West India Regiments engaged the Irish-born Hugh Lyle Carmichael, who features in a case study, in the role of their commander.³⁹

The Irish military presence in Jamaica highlighted the connections with Empire, especially concerning the Irish Catholic involvement in both the British and French armies.

³⁴ See Chapter 2, section ii.

³⁵ Edward M. Spiers, 'Army organization and society in the nineteenth century' in Thomas Bartlett and Keith Jeffery (eds), *A military history of Ireland* (Cambridge, 1996), p. 348.

³⁶ Thomas Bartlett and Keith Jeffery, 'An Irish military tradition?' in idem (eds), *A military history of Ireland*, pp 10-18.

³⁷ Michael Durey, 'White slaves: Irish rebel prisoners and the British Army in the West Indies 1799-1804' in *Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research*, lxxx (2002), pp 296-312.

³⁸ Alfred B. Ellis, *The history of the first West India regiment* (London, 1885), p. 78.

³⁹ See Chapter 8, section ii.

The regiments displayed a degree of mobility, and the Irish soldiers regularly moved throughout the region. Tropical diseases and poor accommodation contributed to a high death rate of the soldiers. An outbreak of yellow fever during the Haitian Revolution in 1802 severely affected the British army as well as the French refugees that arrived in Jamaica.⁴⁰ It posed the question of how the imperial structures that facilitated the move of the Catholic Irish soldiers impacted their presence in Jamaica. The case studies will further assess the consequence of the death rate among the Irish soldiers in Jamaica during the period 1770 to 1814.

Different experiences characterised the involvement of Protestant, Catholic and Dissenter Irish in the British army in the period 1770 to 1814.⁴¹ The Haitian Revolution added the French aspect to the military presence in Jamaica. Since the seventeenth century, France had been recruiting in Ireland, and several Irish Catholics served in the French army during the Haitian Revolution.⁴² Since 1793, the British government had been involved in the suppression of the Haitian Revolution. The conflict presented them with the opportunity to neutralise the French competition in sugar production, which would benefit Jamaica.⁴³ The British occupied sections of the French colony, which required a military presence to protect it from rebel attacks.⁴⁴ It proved to be a costly exercise and by 1797 the occupying force abandoned the expedition after sustained losses. The British navy remained involved in the blockade of Cap Français and Jamaica became a destination for French refugees.⁴⁵ The Haitian Revolution highlighted the Irish connections with both the French and British

⁴⁰ Philippe R. Girard, *The slaves who defeated Napoleon: Toussaint Louverture and the Haitian war of independence, 1801-1804* (Tuscaloosa, 2011), p.172.

⁴¹ Thomas Bartlett, *Ireland: a history* (Cambridge, 2011), pp 169-72.

⁴² Thomas Bartlett, 'Defence, counter-insurgency and rebellion: Ireland, 1793-1803' in Thomas Bartlett and Keith Jeffery (eds.), *A military history of Ireland* (Cambridge, 1997) pp 248-56.

⁴³ David Geggus, 'The British government and the Saint Domingue slave revolt, 1791-1793 in *The English Historical Review*, xciv (Apr. 1981), pp 285-87.

⁴⁴ Jeremy D. Popkin, *A concise history of the Haitian revolution* (Oxford, 2012), p. 63.

⁴⁵ James Robertson, *Gone is the ancient glory: Spanish Town, Jamaica, 1534-2000* (Kingston, 2005), p. 135; Burnard and Garrigus, *The plantation machine*, p. 210.

colonial empires and illustrated the mobility of especially the Catholic Irish during the long eighteenth century.

The Irish Catholic soldiers in Jamaica and the French army featured in two distinct ways. Firstly, during the revolution in France, the Irish regiments of the French army were renamed, split up or disbanded. A number of Irish Catholic officers left France and joined the British army in 1794. They were enlisted in the Irish Catholic Brigade, which retained French structures and titles.⁴⁶ The British army recruited troops for the Brigade among the Catholic population in Ireland. After 1795 the regiments of the Brigade were sent out to the Caribbean and stationed in Jamaica.⁴⁷ Secondly, the Irish Catholic soldiers that remained part of the French army were deployed during the Haitian Revolution in the 1790s. When the British army arrived to occupy the island, the Irish soldiers that had enlisted in French service surrendered. The British moved them to Jamaica and their regiment was disbanded in 1796. The remaining soldiers were moved to the Irish Catholic Brigade.⁴⁸ This highlights the degree of mobility of the Irish Catholic soldiers, which will be further illustrated in Chapter 8.

In the aftermath of the Haitian Revolution, the Protestant Irish continued to be a feature of civil government.⁴⁹ This poses the question of how they used their connections within the structure of Empire to move from their military positions and became, for instance, governor. The contrasting experiences of the Protestant, Catholic and Dissenter Irish in this period highlights the issue of colonial assimilation, especially if they became ‘hybridised’ Britons as Cullen suggested.⁵⁰ The events surrounding the Haitian Revolution illustrated the

⁴⁶ Roger N. Buckley, *The British army in the West Indies, society and the military in the revolutionary age* (Kingston, 1998), pp 106-08.

⁴⁷ David Murphy, *The Irish brigades, 1685-2006* (Dublin, 2007), pp 30-32.

⁴⁸ *Ibid*, 20-23.

⁴⁹ The term civil government is used here to indicate that these men entered the colonial government structures as opposed to being part of the military presence on the island.

⁵⁰ Nicholas Canny, ‘Foreword’ in Kevin Kenny (ed.), *Ireland and the British Empire* (Oxford, 2004), p. viii.

effect of Empire on the Irish military presence in Jamaica, which will be further illustrated in the case studies.

III *Slavery and abolition*

This section will outline the Irish connections with the institution of slavery. First it will focus on the plantation economy in Jamaica and how the Irish became slave owners. It will also illustrate how the mercantile connections between Ireland and Jamaica supported the institution of slavery. The second part will focus on the Protestant, Catholic and Dissenter Irish involvement in the abolition of slavery in the period 1823 to 1834; they featured as abolitionists as well as pro-slavery supporters.⁵¹ It will also illustrate the involvement of the Catholic Irish in colonial government, which poses the question of how they featured in the context of Empire during the first half of the nineteenth century. In addition, Presbyterians from Ireland became involved in missionary work.⁵² The section will highlight the experiences of the Irish and their relationship with the institution of slavery.

The white settler minority of nineteenth-century Jamaica had a strong degree of solidarity in their defence of slavery.⁵³ This raises the question of whether the Irish subscribed to the sense of unity among the white settlers of Jamaica. In the 1820s, the abolitionist movement in Britain began to argue for an end to slavery after the slave trade had been abolished in 1807. Eventually, the House of Commons passed the Slavery Abolition Act in 1833 that led to the freeing of the enslaved in Jamaica on 1 August 1834.⁵⁴ On that date, slavery was replaced by the apprenticeship system, which was abolished after four years. In

⁵¹ Nini Rodgers, 'Ireland and the black Atlantic in the eighteenth century' in *Irish Historical Studies*, xxii (Nov. 2000), pp 188-92.

⁵² Trevor Burnard, 'Harvest years? Reconfigurations of Empire in Jamaica, 1756-1807' in *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, xl (2012), pp 533-55.

⁵³ Christer Petley, 'Slavery, emancipation and the Creole world view of Jamaican colonists, 1800-1834' in *Slavery and Abolition*, xxvi (Apr., 2005), pp 93-114.

⁵⁴ Christer Petley, *Slaveholders in Jamaica: colonial society and culture during the era of abolition* (London, 2009), pp 140-58.

this period of change, the Protestant, Catholic and Dissenter Irish featured as government officials, plantation owners and anti-abolitionists. To assess the Irish relationship with the institution of slavery, their involvement in the sugar plantation economy in Jamaica needs to be considered.

The Protestant, Catholic and Dissenter Irish were confronted with the institution of slavery when they settled in Jamaica. During the eighteenth century several Protestant Irish became involved in the plantation business and, consequently, became slave owners. In addition, other Irish in Jamaica became involved in the day-to-day business of the plantation economy. This included the poor whites who, for instance, worked as overseers on the plantations. As the case studies will demonstrate, there was a link between the Irish lawyer group and property ownership as a number of wealthy lawyers acquired sugar plantations on the island in the first part of the eighteenth century. The legacy of the Irish slaveholding activities was recorded, when the owners claimed compensation at the time of abolition.⁵⁵ The case studies will investigate the involvement of the Irish as owners of large plantations and smallholders in Jamaica. They will consider the differences between the Protestant, Catholic and Dissenter Irish experiences and their connection with slavery.

A number of Irish traders had connections to the institution of slavery and the plantation economy. They included, for instance, the Irish Dissenter merchant Samuel Watt, who owned slaves and supplied provisions to the plantations from his Kingston agency. The structures of Empire facilitated these mercantile links and brought the Irish merchant houses in contact with the institution of slavery. Irish traders based in London shipped bulk provisions to the Caribbean, while sugar arrived in Ireland through their connections.⁵⁶ They included, for instance, the Nesbitt family based in London, who had a commercial interest in

⁵⁵ Nick Draper, 'Research note: "Dependent on precarious subsistences": Ireland's slave-owners at the time of emancipation' in *Britain and the World*, vi (Sept. 2013), pp 220-42.

⁵⁶ Craig Bailey, 'Metropole and colony: Irish networks and patronage in the eighteenth-century Empire' in Enda Delaney and Donald MacRaild, *Irish migration, networks and ethnic identities* (Abingdon, 2007), pp 18-38.

Jamaica that linked them directly to slavery.⁵⁷ This poses questions about the points raised by Nick Draper, especially on how the mercantile links between Ireland and Jamaica facilitated the institution of slavery through the supply trade.⁵⁸ The case studies will further illustrate the links of the Irish merchants with the institution of slavery, assisted by the structures of Empire.

In the period 1823 to 1836, the Protestant Irish continued to feature in the civil government of Jamaica. It coincided with growing opposition to the institution of slavery in the metropole. Both the Earl of Belmore and the Marquess of Sligo featured as governor of Jamaica in this period, but in contrasting roles. Belmore followed the nineteenth-century Protestant Irish tradition of imperial service.⁵⁹ Belmore's presence from 1828 to 1832 generated a large degree of controversy, especially in the aftermath of the 1831 Baptist War. During his governorship, he was assisted by the Protestant Irish attorney general, Fitzherbert Batty, who was also a plantation owner. Both men were opposed by the abolitionist missionaries.⁶⁰ In contrast to Belmore, Sligo had a connection with Jamaica and owned two plantations on the island. Sligo was supported by the attorney general, Dowell O'Reilly, a Catholic Irishman who had obtained the patent after a legal career in Ireland.⁶¹ This poses the question of Sligo's and Belmore's links with the white elite on the island and views on white unity. On the one hand they were part of the structures of Empire with instructions from the metropole, while on the other hand they needed to work with the local assembly to establish a working local government. The case studies will investigate the difficulties that both governors faced and the Irish links that they maintained.

⁵⁷ Craig Bailey, 'Nesbitts of London and their networks, 1747-1817' in David Dickson, Jan Parmentier and Jane Ohlmeyer (eds), *Irish and Scottish mercantile networks in Europe and overseas in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries* (Ghent, 2007) pp 231-50.

⁵⁸ Draper, 'Research note', 220-42.

⁵⁹ Barry Crosbie, *Irish imperial networks: migration, social communication and exchange in nineteenth century India* (Cambridge, 2011), p. 169; Peter Marson, *Belmore: The Lowry Corrys of Castle Coole, 1646-1913* (Belfast, 2007), p. 174.

⁶⁰ Mary Turner, *Slaves and missionaries: the disintegration of Jamaican slave society, 1787-1834* (Kingston, 1982), pp 169-70.

⁶¹ Obituary in *Gentleman's Magazine* (London, 1855) cxcviii, p. 651.

The Jamaican slaveholders were ‘committed to a social order based on ideas of racial inequality’,⁶² and vigorously defended their own interests during the period of abolition. This was illustrated by one of the Irish property owners, Hamilton Brown, who remained a supporter of the institution of slavery and actively opposed abolition.⁶³ A handful of abolitionists from Ireland featured in Jamaica during the same period. They included the Irish author R. R. Madden, who was appointed as a special magistrate,⁶⁴ and the Presbyterian missionary Hope Masterton Waddell. Both were sojourners in Jamaica and both wrote a book about their experiences on the island.⁶⁵ Madden’s background highlighted the complex nature of the Irish and slavery, as members of his family had previously been slave owners. While he direct connection with the island through property or mercantile links, his relationship with the other white settlers remained fraught. This raises the question of whether the Irish abolitionist formed part of the white unity on the island. These issues will be further illustrated in the case studies of the individual experiences of the Irish during the period of abolition.

This chapter outlines the three areas of research around the Irish in Jamaica and the British Empire. It highlights the impact of imperial involvement in local politics, the effect of the structures of Empire and the Irish and the institution of slavery. It discusses two controversies that highlight the greater metropolitan scrutiny in the late eighteenth century, posing questions about the Protestant Irish involvement in local politics. This coincided with discussions around colonial control in Jamaica, where constitutional arrangements in Ireland featured as an example. The effect of Empire in Jamaica was illustrated by highlighting the

⁶² Petley, ‘Slavery, emancipation and the Creole world view’, p. 94.

⁶³ Petley, *Slaveholders*, p. 29.

⁶⁴ The special magistrates supervised the implementation of the apprenticeship system by inspecting the plantations and held a court where the former enslaved and plantation owners could lodge complaints; see Thomas C. Holt, *The problem of freedom: race, labor, and politics in Jamaica and Britain, 1832-1938* (Baltimore, 1992), pp 57-58.

⁶⁵ Hope Masterton Waddell, *Twenty-nine years in the West Indies and Central Africa* (London, 1863); Petley *Slaveholders*, pp 78-9

Irish military presence facilitated by the structures of Empire during the Haitian Revolution. The connection between Ireland and slavery in Jamaica featured both in the ownership of plantations and through mercantile connections. The period of abolition illustrated how the Irish featured both as advocates of slavery and as abolitionists. The three areas of research introduced in this chapter demonstrate how the structures of Empire shaped the Protestant, Catholic and Dissenter Irish presence in Jamaica, which will be illustrated in the case studies that follow.

II

4 Irish Catholics and white settler society in Jamaica

The position of Irish Catholics in the white settler society is difficult to determine, as their religious affiliation meant they were rarely mentioned in the official documents. In the eighteenth century, their colonial experience differed from the Protestant and Dissenter Irish presence. As Orla Power demonstrated, the Catholic Irish used informal connections based around kinship.¹ They also demonstrated a degree of mobility around the Caribbean, as the first case study in this chapter will illustrate. The colonial experiences of the Catholic Irish remained partially hidden, especially around the time of the French invasion. The other white settlers displayed a degree of mistrust of Catholics. The case studies will indicate the effect of this on the concept of white unity, using the limited source material that is available.

In this chapter three case studies are presented to illustrate the colonial experience of Catholic Irish in the white settler society of Jamaica. The aim is to highlight the restrictions they faced and how they managed to organise their affairs around this. The first case study concerns John Stapleton, which will outline the effects of the French invasion of 1694 on Irish Catholics on the island. The second will focus on the presence in Jamaica of Redmond McGragh, who used local connections to conduct his business. A third case study will illustrate the fragmented nature of the Irish presence in early colonial Jamaica using the probate inventories as source material. They highlighted the local connections between the Irish in a period when the treatment of the Catholic Irish posed questions about the degree of white unity among the white settlers in Jamaica.

I John Stapleton

In this case study, the period around the French invasion is used to illustrate the difficulties of the Catholic Irish in Jamaica. It will focus on the experiences of John Stapleton, who was forced to flee the island in 1694. The case study will highlight the informal links of the

¹ Orla Power, 'Friend, foe or family? Catholic Creoles, French Huguenots, Scottish Dissenters: aspects of the Irish diaspora at St. Croix, Danish West Indies, c.1760' in Niall Whelehan (ed.), *Transnational perspectives on modern Irish history* (Abingdon, 2015), pp 30-44.

Catholic Irish in Jamaica. This is illustrated by introducing the Irish provost marshal Smith Kelly, who assisted Stapleton in his escape. The treatment of Stapleton, who was identified as Catholic Irish, enables an evaluation of his identity and the complexities of white unity in Jamaica. As the case study will demonstrate, Stapleton maintained a connection with his extended family in Montserrat while he also displayed a degree of mobility.

Originally from Co. Tipperary, the Stapleton family had fled Ireland during the Cromwellian Wars, settling both in France and Spain and retaining connections there. They returned under the Restoration, when Sir William Stapleton was made governor of the Leeward Islands.² It is likely that John Stapleton arrived in the West Indies through his extended family connections. When he moved to Jamaica is unclear, but he must have settled there during the 1680s. Stapleton was a signatory on the petition of support for Father Churchill, the Catholic priest who arrived on the island under instruction of James II.³ Otherwise he remained elusive and difficult to trace through the records. Governor Beeston mentioned Stapleton and his wife in the period of the French invasion. The fact that he later settled in St Domingue and could purchase a plantation there indicates that he had some financial means at his disposal. There is no record of Stapleton owning property in Jamaica. When taking into consideration his family links, John Stapleton was in all likelihood a merchant, who regularly did business with the French. It would also explain the line of communication with his wife after he absconded and his later business dealings in France.⁴

² Because the family moved between jurisdictions in the seventeenth century, it is difficult to trace the exact lineage of John Stapleton. His year of birth has been noted by others as 1666 but this remains difficult to verify; see John Burke, *A genealogical and heraldic dictionary of the peerage and baronetage of the British Empire* (London, 1839), pp 982-83; James R. V. Johnston, 'The Stapleton sugar plantations in the Leeward Islands' in *Bulletin of the John Rylands library*, xlviii (1965), pp 175-206.

³ Anon., 'An address of the Catholics in Jamaica to the Duke of Albemarle' in *Interesting tracts, relating to the island of Jamaica* (Spanish Town, 1800), pp 214-15.

⁴ 'Beeston's narrative' in *CSP (America and the West Indies)* xiv, 1,236 i (Aug. 1694).

During his time in Jamaica Stapleton developed several informal links, notably with the Irish provost marshal, Smith Kelly.⁵

Major Smith Kelly had been a deputy provost marshal since the 1670s and was promoted to provost marshal in 1686.⁶ The designation of major was a reference to his rank in the militia. He owned a 200-acre plantation in the parish of St Thomas in the East.⁷ Kelly had opposed the governor, the duke of Albemarle, in May 1688 and had been dismissed after he arranged for the Catholic slave trader James de Castillo to escape the island when his arrest warrant had been issued.⁸ He was one of the officials who were reinstated in 1688 to their former positions upon the death of the duke.⁹ Smith Kelly was a Protestant Irishman as he had an officer rank in the militia and obtained the post of provost marshall. This section will explore the connection between Stapleton and Smith Kelly in the period of the French invasion as an illustration of the informal connections of the Irish.

As outlined in Chapter 2, in the period around the French invasion of 1694, a degree of suspicion focused on Irish Catholics. John Stapleton's mercantile connections with St Domingue would have raised concerns with the authorities. Governor Beeston's letter sent to the Board of Trade in August 1695 related the events surrounding the French attack and the involvement of the Catholic Irish.¹⁰ Beeston explained that Stapleton and another Irishman,

⁵ His son, the writer John Kelly, was admitted into the Inner Temple in 1712, where he was listed as 'the son and heir of Smith Kelly' and said to originate from Aughrim in Jamaica; for further details see Thomas Keymer, 'Kelly, John (c.1684–1751)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004). (<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/15299>) (22 Sept. 2015); Will of Smith Kelly, 7 Feb. 1708 (National Archives (Kew), PROB 11/501/13).

⁶ 'Minutes of Council of Jamaica' in *CSP (America and the West Indies)* xii, 1,021 (Nov. 1688).

⁷ Plats, Dec. 1684 (JARD, 1B/11/2/30, f. 100). He is listed as one of the individuals whose property had been damaged in 'Account of the invasion of Jamaica, 1694' in *CSP (America and the West Indies)* xvii, 443 (May 1699). His son petitioned the metropolitan government for compensation, citing that his father 'at the time of the Revolution [...] at the hazard of his life, proclaimed King William Lord of that Island, King of England, &c'; see 'Letter signed J. Kelly' in Joseph Redington (ed.), *Calendar of Treasury Papers*, (London, 1883) v, 49 (after 1715). He also owned two small plots of foot land (less than an acre, possibly for a dwelling) in Port Royal; see Patents (JARD, 1B/11/1/11, f 66; 1B/11/1/12, f. 121).

⁸ Explained in detail in 'The case of Smith Kelly' in *CSP (America and the West Indies)* xii, 1,754 (May 1688) and 1,777 (June 1688); see also *JAJ*, i, 135.

⁹ As directed in 'The king to the president and council of Jamaica' in *CSP (America and the West Indies)* xiii, 29 (Feb. 1689).

¹⁰ 'Beeston narrative'.

Lynch,¹¹ had refused to take the oaths of allegiance and supremacy and that he had issued a warrant for their arrest. Refusing the oaths (which were administered simultaneously) in the period after James II and the war with France caused a degree of suspicion. And after the events on St Kitts, where the Catholic Irish had sided with the French, the English remained concerned about the loyalty of the Catholic Irish.¹² The two men sought the protection of Smith Kelly, who, according to Beeston, kept them 'at his plantation for six months'.¹³ The governor also suspected that the two got further assistance in the Windward area of Jamaica, where Kelly's plantation was situated.¹⁴ Eventually, the provost marshal managed to get the two off the island under the pretence of shipping indigo to the Dutch island of Curaçao. During the ensuing attack by the French, Smith Kelly was killed defending his plantation, which was destroyed.¹⁵ This illustrated that, as previously with de Castillo, Smith Kelly assisted the two Catholic settlers pursued by the authorities. It also indicated the importance of informal links between the two Irishmen.

The experiences of Stapleton and Lynch highlighted the restrictions that the Catholic Irish faced in this period. After they had escaped, tensions began to rise further and Beeston decided to leave the Windward part of the island undefended. He suspected that the Irish in the area would join the French commander Du Casse, pointing out that 'Stapleton, Lynch and other of the rogues who had deserted us, had told him [Du Casse] that the fortifications of Port Royal were down and the population much weakened by the earthquake, sickness and

¹¹ Beeston noted that 'Lynch, as I guess, came in a sloop as a spy' in *ibid.* The name Lynch was not uncommon in Jamaica, which previously had the English-born Sir Thomas Lynch as governor. There had been a Stephen Lynch on the island who had acted as an agent to Sir Robert Holmes in 1688. Another possibility was Capt. John Lynch, a merchant from Jamaica who later owned land around the Charleston area in South Carolina in the same period. See S. B. Bates, H. C. Leland (eds), *Abstracts of the records of the surveyor general of the province of Charlestowne 1678-1698* (Mount Pleasant, 2007), pp 121, 140-41.

¹² 'The Irish may have behaved well in St. Kitts, but they are always drinking health to King James' in Minutes of the council of war in the West Indies' in *CSP (America & West Indies)* xiv, 281 (Apr. 1693).

¹³ 'Beeston's narrative'.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ A property with the name Aughrim did not feature in eighteenth and nineteenth-century Jamaican documents. It perhaps had changed name to Green Castle Pen, which was registered to James Kelly from Ireland in 1835. See 'Jamaica St Thomas-in-the-East, Surrey 217' (UCL Slavery Database); Bernard Burke, *A genealogical and heraldic History of the landed gentry of Great Britain and Ireland* (London, 1871), pp 722-23.

desertion, that at least five hundred men affected to King James would join them'.¹⁶ The number of sympathisers seems exaggerated. Those whom he described as 'affected to King James' were in all likelihood Irish Catholics, though, and probably included the 'rogues' that he referred to. In all his reports of the French assault the lieutenant governor continually mentioned 'Irish deserters' and those of the Catholic religion.¹⁷ One could argue that Beeston had perhaps found a useful distraction to hide his own inability to mount a defence of the island. Exaggerating the number of Catholic Irish traitors had an air of convenience and resembled the anti-Irish sentiment that had been evident in the English-speaking islands.¹⁸ Still, his attitude highlighted the hostility that the Catholic Irish encountered and the fractured nature of white unity during this period.

Beeston was aware that 'Captain Stapleton', as he had addressed him previously, was a well-connected individual in the region.¹⁹ John Stapleton was part of an Irish family that had established several links with the Caribbean in the seventeenth century. Sir William Stapleton had been governor of the Leeward Islands in the seventeenth century, where he was joined by his brothers Edmund and Redmond, with the former being deputy governor on Nevis and the latter lieutenant governor of Montserrat in the 1670s.²⁰ They dominated local politics in the 1670s and 1680s and owned several plantations. These considerable family connections assisted John Stapleton in obtaining a plot of land in Montserrat. Beeston had been informed of Stapleton's family connections with the Leeward Islands and in official letters he urged the Board of Trade to confiscate his property on Montserrat. The governor did find that, besides Smith Kelly, Stapleton had further links with the establishment. When

¹⁶ 'Beeston narrative'.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ 'Lieutenant-Governor Stede to the Earl of Shrewsbury' in *CSP (America and the West Indies)* xiv, 397 (Sept. 1689).

¹⁹ 'Lieutenant-Governor Sir William Beeston to Lords of Trade and Plantations' in *CSP (America & West Indies)* xiv, 1,004 (Apr. 1694).

²⁰ 'Answer to the several heads of their Lordships' letter' in *CSP (America and West Indies)* x, 741 i; 'Governor Sir Nathaniel Johnson to Lords of Trade and Plantations' in *CSP (America and the West Indies)* xii, 1,387 (Aug. 1687).

officials intercepted the correspondence with his Galway-born wife Helen, who had remained in Jamaica, two council members were suspended.²¹ The council members were accused of trying to provide the enemy with information on the defences of the island, something that was never conclusively proved. John Stapleton soon became Jean Stapleton and remained on St Domingue, where he was eventually joined by his wife and two children, and settled on a plantation on the north coast. After a few years, the family moved to Nantes, where they became part of the Irish exiled community. In 1698 Jean Stapleton created a will, which listed the Montserrat plot and the plantation in Petite Anse, St Domingue. He died in 1701.²²

The Stapleton case study illustrated the colonial experience of the Catholic Irish in Jamaica at a time when they faced a degree of suspicion related to their religious affiliation. It highlighted that white unity fractured, as the other European settlers viewed Irish Catholics as disloyal. In this case, Stapleton experienced the disadvantages of his identity and was forced to leave the island. The involvement of Smith Kelly also demonstrated the importance of the informal connections that the Irish in Jamaica maintained. Stapleton's move to St Domingue and later France highlighted the mobility of the Catholic Irish as noted by Power.

II Redmond McGrath

This case study will outline the methods used by Catholic Irish property owners to circumnavigate the restrictions imposed. In the eighteenth century, these barriers centred on the oaths that had to be sworn for official positions, such as entering the assembly. The emphasis during this time was on restricting Catholics' access to most aspects of civil life. Due to the increased suspicion of Catholics around the period of the French invasion, they appeared to avoid the courts to settle their business. As property owners, Catholics could vote in the assembly elections. As they were part of the electorate, the assembly members acted on

²¹ *CSP (America & West Indies)* xiv, 970, 1,184 (Mar.-Aug. 1694).

²² Will of Jean Stapleton, 1698 as noted in G. Saupin, 'Les Réseaux Commerciaux des Irlandais de Nantes sous le Règne de Louis XIV' in David Dickson, Jan Parmentier, and Jane Ohlmeyer (eds), *Irish and Scottish mercantile networks in Europe and overseas in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries* (Ghent, 2007), pp 137-39.

the petitions. However, that did not stop the members from their own investigations into alleged disloyal behaviour.

This case study presents the example of Redmond McGragh, who was also listed as one of the signatories who praised the arrival of the English priest Churchill on the island in 1687.²³ Like John Stapleton, McGragh must have felt confident that the degree of religious toleration introduced by James II gave him enough security to be public about his Catholicism. The letter was also signed by a Bryan McGragh, possibly a relative.²⁴ His allegiance to the new king was no surprise, as the McGragh family in Ireland had strong Jacobite connections, which in turn was the likely reason why he had left Ireland.²⁵ McGragh was confronted with a difficult position when Albemarle died in 1688. The passing of the duke signalled the return of the Protestant planters to power. During his time on the island, McGragh had been able to acquire property under the royal proclamation of 1661.²⁶ This case study will outline the methods used by McGragh to conduct his business around the property that he owned, which will be compared to similar methods used by James de Castillo. In addition it will highlight the difficulties McGragh encountered in relation to his religious affiliation.

To avoid the use of the courts, McGragh petitioned the assembly and requested that a private act be entered into the statute books to conduct his business. In August 1695, the assembly put forward a bill titled 'to enable Redmond McGragh and others to sell lands for

²³ Alternatively spelt McGrath, McGrah or M'Raugh; the JAJ refers to him as McGragh.

²⁴ 'An address of the Catholics in Jamaica', p. 215.

²⁵ The name Macgragh in the seventeenth century can be traced back to Tulla, Co. Clare, where they owned land. A Redmond Macgrath was mentioned as holding 400 and 176 acres that he mortgaged to John Macgrath for £400 in 1684. It appeared that Redmond had been at the centre of a family dispute where in 1682 his father Edmond Macgrath imposed an annuity of £20 to be paid to his brother Thomas McGragh, by deed. This family conflict was possibly the reason why he decided to leave Ireland. The lands were eventually confiscated and sold. See 'Petition of John Magrath' and 'Petition of Mrs. Honora Magrath' from the 'Abstract of Petitions from the Court of Claims, Dublin (1700)' as transcribed in James Frost, *History and topography of the county of Clare* (Dublin, 1893), pp 585, 591 and John D'Alton, *King James' Irish army list* (2 vols, London, 1869) i, pp 363-65.

²⁶ 'Proclamation for the encouragement of planters in Jamaica' in *CSP (America & West Indies)* v, 195 (Dec.1661); Alexander Aikman, *The laws of Jamaica 1681-1759* (Spanish Town, 1802), pp xxviii-xxxiv.

payment of his debts'. Who the others were in this case remained unclear, although it can be assumed that they would be people in a similar situation to McGragh. Unfortunately, no papers relating to this case have survived.²⁷ The only reference is to two pieces of land that were patented by McGragh in 1687 and 1689. The first piece of land was listed as 120 acres in the parish of St Andrew, while the second was a survey of 900 acres in the parish of St George. The first was patented in May 1687 and the second in January 1695.²⁸ Considering the time discrepancy in relation to the plot in St George, it can be assumed that the petition of McGragh probably relates to that patent.²⁹ The entry of the act onto the statute books did not resolve all the issues and a year later he petitioned the commission of grievances of the assembly. This time he asked that 'a day for hearing his business' be organised and it was 'ordered that the committee of grievances be revived'.³⁰ There were no further reports in the sources, indicating that during the hearing the issues were either resolved or dismissed. The above illustrated that by petitioning the assembly, a Catholic property owner such as McGragh could resolve their business affairs.

In the period around the French invasion, McGragh found himself under close scrutiny due to his religious affiliation. In 1696 he became entangled in the affair of Capt. William Hall,³¹ a member of the assembly who had a grievance against one of the judges in the Supreme Court. Hall was described as someone that 'served neither God, the King, nor the country', which indicated that his loyalty was being questioned.³² The assembly complained to the governor, who pointed out that the judge had been forced to reprimand Hall for neglecting his duties as a local magistrate. Hall was accused of 'not frequenting the

²⁷ The sitting of 1 Aug. 1695 included both the bill and the act 'to enable Redmond McGragh and others to sell lands for payment of his debts'; the minutes for the following session in Oct. 1695 are missing. See *JAJ*, i, 156.

²⁸ Patents (JARD, 1B/11/1/11 f. 64; 1B/11/1/12, f. 242); Plats (JARD, 1B/11/2/21, f. 52).

²⁹ The parish of St George on the North Coast was still in development at that stage and 900 acres a large tract of under developed land.

³⁰ There were no further reports from the committee, see *JAJ*, i, 166.

³¹ William Hall (d. 1699) was a planter and owner of Hall's Delight in the parish of St Andrew, where both his children were baptised; for a pedigree see Noel B. Livingston, *Sketch pedigrees of some of the early settlers in Jamaica* (Kingston, 1909), p. 78.

³² *JAJ*, i, 162.

[Anglican] church' and had 'refused a captain's commission'.³³ In the capacity of magistrate, he had failed to arrest McGragh, who, when visiting Hall, allegedly 'had spoke ill of his majesty [William] in his house'.³⁴ Eventually, the matter was resolved when the judge apologised.³⁵ Although neither the judge nor the governor had referred to the religion of either man, the fact that they did not attend the Anglican Church, had refused commissions, and displayed a dislike of King William fuelled suspicions. The Hall affair illustrated the degree of suspicion that McGragh was confronted with, which was linked to his religious affiliation.

Besides McGragh, others used petitions to conduct their business; they included James de Castillo, who had links with the Irish on the island as noted in the previous section. He had been knighted by King William, and was appointed Spanish slave-trading agent in Jamaica.³⁶ Originally from Barcelona, Castillo remained a practising Catholic and had a small chapel in his house during the reign of James II, for which he retained the services of an Irish priest, Fr John Baptist Dempsey. Dempsey and Castillo became embroiled with Albemarle when the English priest, Fr Churchill, petitioned the governor to construct a new Roman Catholic Church in Spanish Town. After a hearing chaired by the governor, the latter ruled in favour of Churchill. Castillo was found guilty of perjury and together with Dempsey he fled to Cuba and subsequently to England with the assistance of Smith Kelly.³⁷ The episode showed a connection between Castillo and the Irish Catholics on the island, as Fr Dempsey undoubtedly had brought some of his own countrymen to the makeshift Port Royal church. After the earthquake, Castillo returned to the island to regain his possessions and

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ This meeting did not take place at McGragh's house, but that of William Hall in Spanish Town; *ibid.*, 162.

³⁵ *JAJ*, i, 164.

³⁶ As the Spanish had no trading posts in West Africa as agreed under the Treaty of Tordesillas (1494), they were dependent on foreign slave traders who were supplied under contract of the Crown, or the *asiento*. Castillo had thus been licensed and was able to move between the Spanish and English-speaking spheres in the Caribbean. See David R. Murray, *Odious commerce: Britain, Spain and the abolition of the Cuban slave trade* (Cambridge, 1980), pp 1-3.

³⁷ Francis Osborne, *History of the Catholic Church in Jamaica* (Chicago, 1988), pp 130-38.

became a naturalised citizen, a common practice in the region.³⁸ He also managed to acquire a small piece of land to re-establish his business.³⁹ Dempsey, however, did not appear to return and his brief contribution remained the only trace of him in Jamaica. Castillo had managed to position himself among the white settlers of the island through his slave-trading connections.

Like McGragh, Castillo used petitions to conduct his business. He lodged a petition with the assembly in the summer of 1695 to organise his business dealings over property. In this case, he had been bequeathed land by Charles Whitfield and needed it to be formalised as his property. This was duly done in a similar fashion as McGragh's petition and passed with minor amendments.⁴⁰ This was underlined in March 1699, when the assembly called Castillo again in relation to a petition of support for the Scottish colony at Darien on the Panama coast. It involved two local Jewish merchants, Jacob Mears and John Sadler, who had written a petition in support of establishing trade with the colony. Castillo appeared before the committee and confessed to having seen the petition but denied having written it. Contrary to the Hall affair, Castillo was treated without prejudice and the committee offered him copies of the minutes.⁴¹ The members of the assembly were aware of Castillo's influence as the main agent for the trade in the enslaved on the island. Although Castillo was an influential merchant and naturalised citizen, his religious affiliation prevented him from becoming a fully accepted member of the white settler society.⁴²

³⁸ Patent of naturalisation of Sir James Castillo (JARD, 1/B/11/1/12, f. 154).

³⁹ Inventories (JARD, 1B/11/1/12, f. 144).

⁴⁰ Like McGragh, he petitioned the members of the assembly and was heard by the committee. This was then presented to the assembly and turned into a bill and voted on. After it was passed, it was signed into an act by the governor; see *JAJ*, i, 154.

⁴¹ Mears and Sadler had all their documents confiscated, but as much of their contents were written in Hebrew, the committee called the two men in to testify. Under interrogation, Mears implicated Castillo as the main instigator behind the scheme, but admitted to organising the trade links himself. Mears' accusation was found to be false; see *JAJ*, i, 191-8.

⁴² Castillo had moved away from Port Royal to what is now known as Harbour View, on the eastern fringe of Kingston; see 'Governor Sir William Beeston to Council of Trade and Plantations' in *CSP (America and the West Indies)* xvi, 547 (June 1698).

The case study of McGragh illustrated how the Irish Catholic property owners managed to conduct their business outside of the courts using the petitions. The restrictions of the oaths and the degree of suspicion levelled at him placed McGragh on the fringes of the white settler community. As he had the ability to vote in the assembly elections, members acted on his petition. In the context of unity, the Hall affair indicated how the other members of the establishment perceived McGragh, underlining the fractured nature of white unity in the period around the French invasion.

III Inventories

The colonial experiences of the Catholic Irish remained hidden during most of the eighteenth century. However, a tentative presence can be reconstructed by evaluating a number of the probate inventories and taking into account the informal links between the Catholic Irish. Due to the lack of wills and birth and death certificates, a study of the probate inventories provided only an impression of the life of the Irish Catholic settlers during the early colonial period. The inventories detailed the possessions of the deceased as well as outstanding debts, which means that they lacked a definite indication that the individuals mentioned were Catholic Irish. The latter was established by considering the links with the other Irish on the island as they were mentioned in the inventories. In the following case study the probate inventories will illustrate the informal connections of the Irish using the probate inventory of Michael Hanigan and a number of individuals linked to the lawyer Redmond Barry. It will also highlight the presence of the 'poor whites' among the Catholic Irish in the first half of the eighteenth century.

Although the earthquake of 1692 had reduced the importance of Port Royal as the main settlement of the island, the town remained an important trading post and naval base throughout the eighteenth century. Besides merchants and shipping agents, the town was also home to tradesmen like barbers and tailors. One of the latter, Michael Hanigan, left an

inventory in July 1722 with a large number of outstanding debts.⁴³ It gave possible clues to him being of Irish origin and to the scope of his circle of clients. The inventory revealed that Hanigan was an important trader in Jamaica and that his circle included many of the Irish on the island. From the contents it became clear that he was no ordinary tailor. Beside his tailoring materials, Hanigan had a stock of twelve gallons of rum in storage that he had sold to a Mr Roche. Another 110 gallons on account of a Mr Dannelson had been left outstanding, which the executors were trying to claim back.⁴⁴

Hanigan must have been one of the more talented tailors on the island, judging by the large number of debts to him. The list of well-known names included members of the assembly and prominent planters.⁴⁵ His clientele was not confined to Port Royal but extended to most of the island. Two Irish lawyers, Andrew Arcedeckne and Edmund Kelly, both owed Hanigan debts for services rendered, while a Justin McGrath was also listed.⁴⁶ It appeared that the Protestant Irish were spending the most, with Edmund Kelly, for instance, owing £58.⁴⁷ Other names on the list included Richard Byrn, James Barry, Michael Lynch, Lawrence Driscoll and Robert Nedham, indicating connections with a number of Irish on the island. While Hanigan provided services for people of the white settler establishment, he also appeared to work for some of the ‘poor whites’ that included, for instance, Colonel Rose’s pen keeper and a Mr Martin at Mr Kelly’s plantation. While there was no clear indication that Hanigan had originally arrived from Ireland, the set of connections that he had indicated that he had strong links with the Irish on the island. As a tailor, he was unlikely to have made a will. It appears that his passing was very sudden as the outstanding debts did not indicate that

⁴³ Inventories (JARD, 1B/11/3/12, f. 107).

⁴⁴ It has proven to be difficult to establish the identity of both men. Mr Roche could be either an Irish or French merchant who traded rum with the Caribbean. There was the partnership of John Roche and John Kelly from Limerick with a West Indian link in the 1740s, while there was the merchant Andrew Roche in Cork in the same period. It is impossible to indicate who had been sold the large quantity of rum.

⁴⁵ In total a sum of £772 19s. 6½d. was left outstanding.

⁴⁶ See Chapter 6 for further details on Arcedeckne and Kelly.

⁴⁷ Inventories (JARD 1B/11/3/12, f. 107).

he had suffered from a prolonged illness.⁴⁸ Hanigan's probated inventory illustrated the extent of the informal links of the Irish on the island.

Hanigan's inventory was very detailed and listed the amount that each individual had left outstanding. One of the names listed on the inventory was that of Redmond Barry of Passage Fort, St Catherine.⁴⁹ He probably had family connections to the Cork area in Ireland, although it was unclear how he had arrived in Jamaica.⁵⁰ Barry began to appear on a number of the probate inventories that could be attributed to the Irish at the start of the eighteenth century. In likelihood a Protestant Irishman, it appears that he became an administrator for Irish Catholics who had to deal with legal formalities. Until his death in 1748, he fostered the formal links with the establishment to conduct informal business with the Catholic Irish.⁵¹ Another example of the connections between Irishmen was the inventory of Conn Connelly, created in Port Royal in October 1734. He was described as a bricklayer and builder, with a large number of enslaved tradesmen. Upon his passing, Connelly had a debt to the Irish lawyer Denis Kelly, in relation to a supply of 20,000 bricks.⁵² The examples of Connolly, Hanigan and Barry demonstrated that a number of Irish had a presence in Port Royal. Their presence was possibly tied to their traditional involvement in the supply of bulk provisions throughout the region.

The inventory of the widow Jane Fitzgerald illustrated a different connection. On her death in 1733, Barry submitted her inventory for approval. Most of her estate consisted of a mortgage debt, while the contents of her house indicated that she probably worked as a

⁴⁸ The warrant for outstanding debts was signed by the governor Nicholas Lawes on 28 July 1722 and witnessed by William Mead and Gilbert Kennedy.

⁴⁹ Currently part of Portmore, Passage Fort was a small village that was used as a ferry stopover when travelling between Spanish Town and Port Royal, a convenient place of residence for Barry, who had connections with both places, see Edward Long, *History of Jamaica* (3 vols, London, 1774), p. 41.

⁵⁰ The Barry family from Ballyclough, Co. Cork included a Redmond who married the daughter of William Taylor in 1700 and had a son of the same name who was high sheriff of Cork in 1734; see Burke, *History of the landed gentry of Great Britain and Ireland* (2 vols, London, 1871), pp 60-61 and Anon., *The peerage of England, Scotland, and Ireland: the peerage of Ireland* (3 vols, London, 1790) iii, pp 35-38.

⁵¹ Inventories (JARD, 1B/11/3/31, f. 158).

⁵² Ibid. (JARD, 1B/11/3/16, f. 172).

seamstress in Kingston. Her outstanding debts were all in relation to garments she had sold.⁵³ Barry was also involved in the affairs of James Kerr. On his death Kerr owed a substantial sum to Barry, whose inventory also listed twelve enslaved men, two of whom had been given the names 'Cork' and 'Antrim'.⁵⁴ The details of the inventories illustrated the kind of commerce in which some of the Irish were engaged, and confirmed the emphasis on the supply trade.⁵⁵ Redmond Barry's presence as the executor on a number of probated inventories illustrated the informal connections between the Irish.

The Catholic Irish featured as professionals, clerks and traders in the early eighteenth century. The colonial experience of these white settlers featured in small number the probated inventories, when they had some possessions. The fragmented evidence associated with these individuals illustrates the character of the Irish presence in Jamaica. In Kingston, Edmund Fitzpatrick, who died in December 1732, was an example of the professionals that found opportunities in Jamaica. As a medical doctor, he had a growing practice; his inventory revealed that he had eleven enslaved in service, part of an estate that was worth £503.⁵⁶ On the other hand, we find a John Lynch, described as a clerk and leaving his widow Bridget Lynch ten enslaved (including one called Galway) and a dwelling. Despite holding a minor administrative position, Lynch had been able to amass some amount of possessions, largely tied up in his property.⁵⁷

Francis Corr was described as a merchant based in Kingston who died in 1735. It is not clear when he arrived on the island, although he appeared to have some connections to London. In 1731 Governor Hunter granted him a substantial plot of land in the parish of

⁵³ Inventories (JARD, 1B/11/3/17, f. 47).

⁵⁴ Ibid. (JARD, 1B/11/3/12, f. 180).

⁵⁵ Most were small, as for example the inventory of the merchant John Braen from the parish of St Andrew. He had a trading business in sundry items and included four enslaved men as part of his inventory. Not an indication of great wealth, except for the presence of wig and a gold-headed cane. Ibid. (JARD, 1B/11/3/13, f. 1).

⁵⁶ Inventories (JARD, 1B/11/3/16, ff 79-80).

⁵⁷ A total of £280 16s. 10½d; Inventories (JARD, 1B/11/3/10, f. 12).

Portland.⁵⁸ His inventory also listed Matthew Corr, probably a relative and business partner. Matthew submitted the inventory for validation to settle the outstanding debts. Francis's passing must have been sudden, as he had many outstanding accounts. His inventory consisted of a large list of invoices, bonds and mortgage deeds, which revealed that he had a large stake in the provisions trade. This leads to the conclusion that he had connections to Ireland.⁵⁹ Matthew continued to live on the island as a merchant and in 1776 was listed as one of the assistants to the grand court in the parish of Portland.⁶⁰

In the capital of Spanish Town, the institutions of government provided opportunities for clerks and other administrators. These included, for instance, a Thomas Fitzpatrick, whose inventory was described as containing a parcel of law books. He had 'two negroe boys' and quite a large outstanding debt.⁶¹ By the 1720s a number of Irish ventured to Jamaica's North Coast, where there was a demand for tradesmen and clerks. Hence a millwright Michael Farrell, who left a small number of enslaved and some cattle that amounted to an inventory of around £1000, was found in the parish of St George.⁶² Also found was John Casey, a tavern owner in the parish of St Ann who had four enslaved, while a small inventory consisted mostly of his premises. On his death in 1728 his widow Mary handled his affairs and possibly retained the tavern together with the four enslaved that she had listed in the inventory.⁶³ The various individuals from Ireland or with Irish connections in Jamaica illustrated the fragmented nature of the Irish presence in the first half of the eighteenth century.

Despite being restricted in obtaining official positions, the Catholic Irish managed to own successful businesses and obtain property in Jamaica. The case studies of John Stapleton

⁵⁸ An area of the island that was late to be developed, Hunter had it surveyed and patents were handed out. The assembly was keen on seeing progress and in a report to the members, the governor indicated that lands had been granted to Samuel Kemermain, Thomas Gloria, Francis Corr, James Hooper and Daniel Smith. All patents were under 2000 acres. See *JAJ*, iii, p. 32.

⁵⁹ Inventories (JARD, 1B/11/3/17, ff 165-9).

⁶⁰ 'Commissioners for the grand court' in *Jamaica almanac* (1776).

⁶¹ *Ibid.* (JARD, 1B/11/3/10, f. 113).

⁶² *Ibid.* (JARD, 1B/11/3/13, f 261-2).

⁶³ *Ibid.* (JARD, 1B/11/3/14, f. 159).

and Redmond McGrath illustrate specific aspects of the informal Irish relationships, and highlight their mobility and adaptability in conducting their business. The probated inventories of the white settlers illustrate the local Irish connections. The case studies presented in this chapter demonstrate how the Catholic Irish differed from the Protestant and Dissenter Irish in their hidden nature. Many of the Catholic Irish in the early eighteenth century managed to remain largely unnoticed, leaving a degree of uncertainty about their scope. This contrasted with the Protestant Irish professionals, who became visible during the first half of the eighteenth century.

5 Protestant Irish lawyers and lawmakers in early eighteenth century Jamaica

This chapter will focus on Protestant Irish lawmakers and lawyers in Jamaica who featured as assembly members, attorney general, and chief justice. It will consider their position among the white settlers and their social background. As Protestants, they were able to obtain official positions, which resulted in a different colonial experience compared to the Catholic Irish. In contrast to the Scots, the Irish could practise English law and received their education in England.¹ There was a shortage of trained lawyers in Jamaica and Protestant Irishmen began to fill these positions. They constituted a small but identifiable group during the eighteenth century. The Protestant Irish retained Atlantic connections and, as the case studies will indicate, returned to Europe on occasion.² Besides their legal practice, the lawyers engaged with local politics and managed to attract a degree of controversy. It made them a noticeable presence in Jamaica during the eighteenth century.³

The subjects of the case studies in this chapter are three Protestant Irish lawyers who were also members of the assembly: William Brodrick, Hugh Totterdell and Edmund Kelly. By the start of the eighteenth century, the Jamaican assembly generally met annually in the period October to December, while the grand court was sitting.⁴ The members were elected from the parishes but did not establish political parties, although the planters and merchants had different interests and opposed each other on various occasions. The Protestant Irish lawyers elected to the assembly involved themselves in these conflicts, siding with both camps. The local assembly provided an opportunity to increase the lawyer's profile. The case studies will highlight the different methods that the Protestant Irish lawyers used to gain

¹ The Scottish judicial system was based on Roman law, which meant Scots could not practice in England or its colonies unless they studied English common law at a local institution. In 1705 the assembly adopted legislation that prevented the Scots from entering the law profession. See *JAJ*, i, 381; Alan L. Karras, *Sojourners in the sun: Scottish migrants in Jamaica and the Chesapeake, 1740-1800* (Ithaca, 1992), pp 16-17; T. C. Barnard, *The kingdom of Ireland, 1641-1760* (Basingstoke, 2004), pp 101-02.

² Karras, *Sojourners in the sun*, pp 16-23.

³ Trevor Burnard, 'European migration to Jamaica, 1655-1780' in *The William and Mary Quarterly*, liii (Oct. 1996), p. 785.

⁴ George Metcalf, *Royal government and political conflict in Jamaica 1729-1783* (London, 1965), p. 9.

political influence. The first case study concerns William Brodrick, who was a member of an influential Protestant Irish family with connections both in Dublin and London. His period on the island characterised the opportunistic nature of the lawyer presence. Brodrick also moved between the Caribbean and Ireland, illustrating the sojourning aspect. In contrast, Hugh Totterdell settled on the island permanently and used his political career to advance his own personal standing. From a different social background than Brodrick, Totterdell used the popular support that he had to advance politically. The third case study presents Edmund Kelly, the Irish-born attorney general and assembly member, who arrived on the island together with his brothers. While all three men had different social backgrounds, they formed part of the white establishment and gained important positions on the island during the first half of the eighteenth century.

I William Brodrick

In the period 1693 to 1702 two Irish-born councillors created a number of difficulties for lieutenant governor William Beeston. Richard Lloyd, the judge of the admiralty, and William Brodrick, the attorney general, were the first exponents of the Irish lawyer group that emerged as a political feature in Jamaican politics. Brodrick's period on the island was intermittent and an example of a sojourning Irishman, as he spent part of his life in England, Ireland, Jamaica and the Leeward Islands. He had well-established family connections, which he used to position himself among the white settler elite. As this case study will demonstrate, Brodrick's powerbase was formed through political manoeuvring as he never showed any intention to acquire large properties or become engaged in the plantation economy. His extended family connections across the Atlantic and ability to acquire a number of patents characterised his influence.

Born in Co. Cork, William Brodrick came from a Protestant Irish family who were rooted in the legal profession. The Brodrick family had holdings both in England and Ireland

and became prominent members of the Irish parliament towards the end of the seventeenth century. They sided with the Whig governments and William's brothers, together with their father St John Brodrick Snr, were part of the Protestant establishment that had a firm grip on Irish politics and a substantial influence at Westminster.⁵ William Brodrick was educated in England and, like his brothers, went to Cambridge to study. In contrast to his siblings, William decided against a career in Ireland or England and sailed for the West Indies. A family friend organised a recommendation from the son of the governor Codrington of the Leeward Islands.⁶ In the event, William passed over Antigua and moved to Jamaica, where by 1694 he had settled in Spanish Town.

Richard Lloyd was born in Co. Roscommon in c. 1661, his Welsh grandfather having settled in Ireland.⁷ Educated in law in Dublin, Lloyd moved to England, where he applied to be the clerk of crown and peace in Jamaica, supported by Gilbert Heathcote. In October 1689 his application was approved, and Lloyd sailed for Jamaica early in the next year. He arrived on the island during the time of Inchiquin's governorship and was sworn in 12 June 1690. A year after he came to the island, Lloyd was elected to the assembly for the parish of St Catherine.⁸ He joined the planters in the assembly who opposed Inchiquin, who tried to push through a revenue bill.⁹ Through his marriage to Mary Guy in July 1690, Lloyd established himself amongst the planter elite.¹⁰ He survived the earthquake in 1692 and was admitted to the council under the instructions that were given to William Beeston, the new governor. In 1693, Lloyd made quick promotion to judge of the admiralty, a powerful and profitable

⁵ D. W. Hayton, *The Anglo-Irish experience 1680-1730: religion, identity and patriotism* (Woodbridge, 2012), pp 77-103.

⁶ Francis Atterbury to St. John Brodrick (Surrey History Centre, Midleton Papers, MS 1248-1, ff 215-216).

⁷ 'Lloyd, Richard (c.1661-1714)' in Eveline Cruickshanks, Stuart Handley, D. W. Hayton (eds), *The history of parliament: the house of commons* (5 vols, Cambridge, 2002) iv, p. 655.

⁸ 'Return of the elections for the Assembly' in *CSP (America & West Indies)* xiii, 1,579 (Jun. 1691).

⁹ 'Governor Lord Inchiquin to Lords of Trade and Plantations' in *CSP (America & West Indies)* xiii, 1,698 (Aug. 1691).

¹⁰ She was the daughter of Richard Guy (d. 1681), one of the earliest settlers and a member of the English invasion force of 1655; see 'Minutes of the Council of Jamaica' in *CSP (America & West Indies)* xii, 726 (Jan. 1672); J. H. Lawrence-Archer, *Monumental inscriptions of the British West Indies from the earliest date* (London, 1875), p. 311.

position on the island. In the following year, Lloyd distinguished himself in the militia during the French invasion.¹¹ By the end of 1695 he was appointed chief justice by Beeston and thus became a fundamental pillar of the government of Jamaica. The early colonial experience of Lloyd illustrated how the Protestant Irish managed to increase their social standing.

Whereas others acquired property, Brodrick used his political connections to advance himself socially. He probably arrived in 1693, and was sworn in as the new attorney general ten days after the new lieutenant governor Beeston had arrived.¹² Brodrick entered politics by being elected to the assembly in March 1695 for the parish of St John.¹³ After two weeks of the assembly being in session, Beeston recommended that Brodrick be admitted to the council, which was approved by the Board of Trade two months later.¹⁴ Like most professionals engaged in law, Brodrick had settled in Spanish Town.¹⁵ By 1696 he had married Hannah Toldervay, the widow of Thomas Ballard Jnr, part of the family of first English settlers on the island.¹⁶ Towards the end of 1696 William travelled to England to argue the case of the Jamaican settlers and he presented a memorial to the Lords of Trade and Plantations, together with others.¹⁷ More significantly, he was given the privilege to be called to the Bar at the Inner Temple in February 1697, without having had to attend the institution.¹⁸ When he returned to Jamaica in May 1697, he had received the grant of the

¹¹ As a major in the militia, Lloyd took command of a large section of the troops and managed to obstruct the assault on St Andrew, where most of the profitable plantations were; see 'Beeston's narrative' in *CSP (America & West Indies)* xiv, 1,236 i (Aug. 1694).

¹² 'Minutes of council of Jamaica' in *CSP (America & West Indies)* xiv, 187 (Mar. 1693).

¹³ *JAJ*, i, 151.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 153 and 'Minutes of council of Jamaica' in *CSP (America & West Indies)* xiv, 1,733 (Mar. 1695), 1,763 (Apr. 1695), 1,837 (May 1695) and 1,840 (May 1695).

¹⁵ Brodrick was recorded as holding foot land (or townland) in Spanish Town; see *Platbooks (JARD, 1B/11/2/7, f. 65)*.

¹⁶ The couple entered into a dispute over Ballard Jr. holdings, see *Index of chancery proceedings (Bridges division), 1613-1714* (4 vols, London, 1913) i, p. 133 (no. 67).

¹⁷ 'Governor Sir William Beeston to Lords of Trade and Plantations' in *CSP (America & West Indies)* xiv, 2,178 (Dec. 1695); 'Messrs. John Heathcote, Brodrick and Lowe, of Jamaica, presented a short memorial as to the state of the island, and dwelt on the danger that now threatened it' in *ibid.*, xv, 473 (Dec. 1696).

¹⁸ F. A. Inderwick (ed.), *Calendar of Inner Temple records* (9 vols, London, 1901) iii p. 330.

patent for attorney general.¹⁹ The position of judge admiral had also been transferred from Lloyd to Brodrick, much to the chagrin of Beeston, who noted that ‘the King’s orders being that no man shall hold two offices, the people murmur that Mr Brodrick is attorney general and judge admiral, and think it a great prejudice to the country’.²⁰

Beeston intended to raise more revenue for the defence of the island, which resulted in opposition from the majority in the assembly. Local legislators supported Lloyd and Brodrick, when they opposed the governor. In April 1698 Beeston failed to swear an amended oath on the specified date, as stipulated in a revenue act sent from London.²¹ When he changed his mind a few days later and signed it, Lloyd and Brodrick objected vehemently: ‘they were taking all the ill advantages that they could against me, interrogated me as if I had been a criminal before them and told me I had forfeited £1000’.²² Eventually, Beeston was allowed to take the oath, but complained bitterly to the Board of Trade about the money he had lost. In turn, Beeston accused Brodrick of favouritism concerning the clerical post of secretary, under the patent owned by the London merchant John Barbar.²³ Beeston recounted that ‘about eighteen months ago, Mr William Brodrick, attorney-general and judge admiral of Jamaica, rented the patent [for the job] from Mr Harris, and put in one Mr Stephen Towse, born in Ireland, but a perfect stranger to affairs in Jamaica’.²⁴ Towse died soon after he had taken up the post, but Beeston related the manoeuvre to the Board of Trade, who subsequently blocked the appointment of Brodrick’s brother-in-law, Mr Whitfield, a clergyman, to a similar administrative position on the island, also under John Barbar’s

¹⁹ Patents (JARD, 1B/11/1/12, f. 297) and ‘Minutes of Council of Jamaica’ in *CSP (America & West Indies)* xv, 1,034 (May 1697).

²⁰ ‘Governor Sir William Beeston to council of trade and plantations’ in *CSP (America & West Indies)* xv, 1184 (Jul. 1697).

²¹ ‘Minutes of Council of Jamaica’ in *CSP (America & West Indies)* xvi, 355 (Apr. 1698).

²² ‘Governor Sir William Beeston to Council of Trade and Plantations’ in *CSP (America & West Indies)* xvi, 357 (Apr. 1698).

²³ ‘List of patent officers’ in *CSP (America & West Indies)* xvi, 890 ii (Oct. 1698).

²⁴ ‘Memorial relating to the Secretary’s office in Jamaica’ in *CSP (America & West Indies)* xvi, 360 (Apr. 1698).

patent.²⁵ The patents proved to be the basis of much of Brodrick's power and he managed to retain them for a sustained period, while the governor could not revoke his position.

After these events, the political situation for William Brodrick deteriorated. In the summer of 1698, Brodrick and Lloyd engaged in their final confrontation with Beeston. The affair involved James de Castillo, who was made a captain in the militia. Brodrick had signed the papers to admit de Castillo, as Beeston had to make an exception for him.²⁶ In June 1698, Lloyd had de Castillo arrested after a perceived insult. Upon hearing this, Beeston released de Castillo, thus undermining Lloyd's authority as the Chief Justice. A confrontation ensued, and 'Colonel Lloyd took such a pet at once, that he has ever since been studying to do me all the harm he can; and because he thinks that Mr Brodrick has friends in England who can be of service to him he has engaged him in his design'.²⁷ This time the council sided with Beeston, and dismissed the allegations entered by Brodrick and Lloyd. Despite their powerful positions, the two Irishmen found themselves suddenly sidelined. The events during Brodrick's first five years in Jamaica illustrated how he managed to gain prominence through political connections and acquiring patents.

In the early eighteenth century, William Brodrick used his Atlantic connections to find new opportunities to continue his career. He moved to the Leeward Islands for a period, where he continued his legal practice. He still held the Jamaican patent of attorney general but left his position as judge of the admiralty.²⁸ Beeston remarked that Brodrick was 'known to all the country as a man of no manner of veracity or morals, so that if all that he had done

²⁵ Whitfield was married to William's sister Katherine. When the holder of the patent of the Secretary's office in Jamaica tried to contract Whitfield to work alongside Towse, the Board of Trade refused after the Heathcote memorial; see 'Mr. Heathcote and Mr. Way presented a memorial' in *CSP (America & West Indies)* xvi, 351 and 360 (Apr. 1698).

²⁶ As a Catholic, de Castillo indicated that he could not sign the oath of supremacy. 'Governor Sir William Beeston to council of trade and plantations' in *CSP (America & West Indies)* xvi, 547 (Jun. 1698).

²⁷ 'Governor Sir William Beeston to council of trade and plantations' in *CSP (America & West Indies)* xvi, 547 (Jun. 1698).

²⁸ Beeston vowed, 'I hope never to see him return Attorney-General again' in 'Governor Sir William Beeston to council of trade and plantations' in *CSP (America & West Indies)* xvi, 636 (Jul. 1698).

here were represented he would appear the wonder of mankind'.²⁹ In London, the influential merchant Sir Gilbert Heathcote supported Beeston by describing Lloyd and Brodrick as 'very troublesome men to the quiet of Jamaica'.³⁰ Brodrick's brothers quickly found out about the events in Jamaica and reported that 'William takes very extravagant courses and is undone'.³¹ Although Brodrick and Lloyd had left Jamaica, Beeston still had other Irishmen to deal with. One of them, Alan Brodrick, a cousin of William, had gained a position of clerk on the island, engaged with the sittings of the grand court.³² Although this was essentially an administrative post, Alan found himself scrutinised by the governor and the Board of Trade because of his family connections.³³ Surprisingly, Beeston suggested that Alan be the next attorney general, but the council intervened, noting that as Alan Brodrick was not a freeholder on the island, he was ineligible. The council also maintained that he 'has not sufficient knowledge of the law' and expressed their worry that he would remain under his cousin's influence.³⁴ This meant that the position was left open while William continued to hold the patent. As Beeston required these positions to be filled to ensure that the local administration continued to function, he made his own appointments, largely ignoring the original patent holders. This brought an increasing number of complaints in front of the Council of Trade.³⁵ As the deliberations continued, Beeston left the island in 1702, while Alan's health deteriorated and he died by the end of 1706.

²⁹ 'Governor Sir William Beeston to council of trade and plantations' in *ibid.*, 704 (Jul. 1698).

³⁰ The Board of Trade refused to become involved as neither Brodrick nor Lloyd had entered any petitions; 'Mr. Gilbert Heathcote questioned' in *CSP (America & West Indies)* xvi, 714 (Aug. 1698); 'Council of trade and plantations to governor Sir William Beeston' in *CSP (America & West Indies)* xvi, 941 (Oct. 1698).

³¹ St. John Brodrick to Alan and Thomas Brodrick Dec. 1698 (Surrey Historical Centre, Middleton Papers, MS 1248-1, ff 305-6).

³² In 1704 a complaint was filed against Alan Brodrick for neglecting his duties and he was put in front of the committee of grievances. They discovered that none of the judgments had been entered for almost a year. When Alan appeared, he complained that he found it impossible to find qualified clerks and used his frequent 'indispositions' as an excuse. Nevertheless, he was reprimanded and his new clerk was to report to the committee to show progress; see *JAJ*, i, 131-32, 139.

³³ 'Journal of the council of trade and plantations' in *CSP (America & West Indies)* xvii, 784 (Sept. 1699).

³⁴ 'Governor Sir William Beeston to council of trade and plantations' in *CSP (America & West Indies)* xvii, 887 (Oct. 1699).

³⁵ 'List of patent officers' in *CSP (America & West Indies)* xviii, 15 iii (Jan. 1700); 'Council of trade and plantations to governor Sir William Beeston' in *ibid.*, xviii, 59 (Jan. 1700).

On the death of his cousin, William Brodrick returned to Jamaica from Montserrat. Family connections were important to the Irish, and Alan must have kept him informed of the situation on the island. Hence, it was no surprise that William was mentioned in his cousin's will and inherited a horse, one of Alan's few possessions.³⁶ In the two decades that followed, Brodrick's presence in Jamaica became intermittent, while his brothers tried to get him a position in Ireland. He received a doctorate in law from Trinity College Dublin and in 1721 was made a judge of the King's Bench in Ireland. He was also put forward as a candidate for the Irish parliament. His brother Alan was at that time lord chancellor, while his nephew St John Brodrick Jnr represented Co. Cork in the Irish parliament. In 1716, William was elected for Mallow, which partly explains his hasty departure from Jamaica.³⁷ For William, the election signalled a new start. However, Alan and Thomas quickly grew disillusioned with their brother, as William's West Indian congenial lifestyle proved incompatible with the demands of an Irish parliamentarian.³⁸

Brodrick was soon forced to resolve his business in the West Indies, as the plantation on Montserrat that he had obtained through marriage was causing him financial problems.³⁹ With his return to Spanish Town, Brodrick was soon courting controversy again. In November 1724 he had a serious altercation in the town with Francis Williams, the well-known black scholar. Williams' father had been manumitted by John Bourden, a former president of the council. Williams' father had been able to obtain property and his son received a good education. Of considerable wealth when he reached adulthood, Francis Williams set up a school and became a prominent figure in Spanish Town. In November 1724 Brodrick lodged a petition that he had been assaulted by Williams, whom he accused of

³⁶ 'I give me loving kinsman William Brodrick my young horse called Strawberry' – he also had a son Thomas back in England; see Allan Brodrick's will proved 30 Nov. 1706 reprinted in V. L. Oliver, *Carribeana* (5 vols, London, 1919) iv, p. 88.

³⁷ He was also made a sergeant at law in 1718 and briefly sat on the bench from 1721; see Edith M. Johnston-Liik, *History of the Irish Parliament, 1692-1800* (Belfast, 2002), pp 274-75.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ Oliver, *Caribbeana*, iv, pp 50-53.

calling him a ‘white dog’.⁴⁰ Francis Williams asked for the evidence that Brodrick had sworn to be given over to him, but the committee refused. While an experienced barrister, Brodrick found in Francis Williams a worthy opponent who possessed an astute legal mind and who was able to counteract the arguments put to him. As a free and educated black man, Williams knew his rights, and had the documents to contest any attempt to curtail them. The committee was evidently worried as they argued that ‘[Francis] Williams’ behaviour is of great encouragement to the negroes of this island in general, and may be attended with ill consequences to the white people’.⁴¹ The Council of Trade eventually dismissed the complaint and after this incident, Brodrick essentially retired. He lived to well into his seventies and in 1730 was still listed as holding patents for the judge of admiralty.⁴² William had no direct heirs and he had disposed of his Montserrat holdings. Broderick’s colonial experience illustrated how the Protestant Irish featured in the Jamaican colonial elite, where they behaved in similar fashion to the other white settlers. He increased his social standing through obtaining patents, political connections and legal expertise. His behaviour indicated that Broderick considered his stay in Jamaica as temporary and he displayed a degree of mobility when moving between Jamaica, Ireland and the Leeward Islands.

II *Hugh Totterdell*

In contrast to William Brodrick, the barrister and assembly member Hugh Totterdell had settled permanently on the island, where he built up his legal practice. As this case study will illustrate, his colonial experience centred on improving his social position. Totterdell lacked any significant Atlantic connections, which meant that he had to develop his own support base in Jamaica. This case study will illustrate how he entered local politics and entered into conflicts with successive governors. Over a fifteen-year period, Totterdell had confrontations

⁴⁰ *JAJ*, ii, 512.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² ‘Governor Hunter’s answers to queries by the board of trade’ in *CSP (America & West Indies)* xxxvii, 627 iii (b) (Dec. 1730).

with governors Beeston, Handasyde and Hamilton and was elected Speaker in 1706. He did not have the extended family or purchasing power to obtain patents as had been the case with Brodrick. As the case studies will illustrate, Totterdell relied on local support to advance himself socially and politically.

Born in Dublin in 1675,⁴³ Totterdell in all likelihood had some preliminary legal training in Ireland before he was admitted to the Middle Temple to train as a barrister in July 1696.⁴⁴ Through a connection with Richard Lloyd and the Freeman family, an opportunity in the West Indies arose.⁴⁵ After completing his training, he sailed for Jamaica, where he put his legal training to use.⁴⁶ His oratorical talents had not gone unnoticed, and soon he was busy advancing his legal practice.⁴⁷ He was noticed by Governor Beeston, who in August 1701 mentioned him as ‘one Mr Hugh Totterdale [sic], an Irish lawyer’, and as someone who was ‘the only cause of all this trouble’ during the last months of his period in office.⁴⁸ Totterdell married the widow of Modyford Freeman, Grace, with whom he had a son, John.⁴⁹ Through marriage, he acquired property and the family lived in a house with ‘rich content’ in Spanish

⁴³ The baptism record described him as the son of John Totterdell, although the surname was occasionally spelt Totterdale; *Register of baptisms of St John the Evangelist* (CoI), Dublin, f. 71 (19 Nov. 1675).

⁴⁴ ‘July 1, Hugh Totterdell son and heir of John T., of Dublin’ in H. F. MacGeagh and H. A. Sturgess (eds), *Register of admissions to the honourable society Middle Temple* (3 vols, London, 1949) i, p. 240.

⁴⁵ One of Lloyd’s daughters married John Freeman, while Totterdell married Modyford Freeman’s second wife, Grace. The Freeman family was well established in the English-speaking Caribbean and three of them, Robert (Speaker), Humphrey and Thomas (chief justice), all played an important role in the early settlement of Jamaica. There was a possible Irish link with the Freeman family at Castle Cor, Kilbarry, Co. Cork. See Noel B. Livingston, *Sketch pedigrees of some of the early settlers in Jamaica* (Kingston, 1909), p. 29; James Henry Lawrence-Archer, *Monumental inscriptions of the British West Indies* (London, 1889), pp 45, 295-97; Bernard Burke, *Landed gentry of Great Britain and Ireland* (London, 1817), pp 690-93; David Hancock (ed.), *The letters of William Freeman* (Oxford, 2002), pp xii-xv.

⁴⁶ The requirement for being called to the Bar consisted of being registered with one of the Inns of Court for four years, meaning Totterdell would have completed in the summer of 1700; see David Lemmings, *Gentlemen and barristers: the Inns of Court and the English bar, 1680-1730* (Oxford, 1990), pp 98-109.

⁴⁷ ‘Governor Sir William Beeston, to the Council of Trade and Plantations’ in *CSP (America & West Indies)* xix, 676 (Aug. 1701).

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ His son did not appear to have the same interest in politics, but appeared as a signatory under ‘Petition of the planters, merchants and traders to the Island of Jamaica’ in *CSP (America & West Indies)* xxxix, 29 i (Jan. 1732); Livingston, *Sketch pedigrees*, p. 29.

Town.⁵⁰ It illustrated Totterdell's ambition to improve his social standing as a successful barrister and member of the white elite in Jamaica.

Totterdell opposed the executive power for most of the fifteen years that he lived on the island. As a practising barrister, he quickly had a confrontation with the authorities, which motivated him to enter politics. He was first elected to the assembly in June 1701 for the parish of St Catherine.⁵¹ According to one of his colleagues, Robert Thurgar, Totterdell appeared 'glad he was elected, for that now he had an opportunity of coming up with the Government, who had given him abundance of affronts, and that in return he would make it his business to cross and oppose them in everything, so much as lay in his power'.⁵² When he entered the assembly, a legal dispute with the governor quickly arose. The assembly members tried to question those appointed to the council about the monies that had been given out in the aftermath of the 1692 earthquake. They were denied this information and the assembly proceeded to publish a public bill that accused the government of misappropriation. This got the attention of Beeston, who called all the members up to his residence.⁵³ During the controversy, Totterdell was singled out by Beeston as the main agitator, describing him as someone who got 'himself a vogue amongst the common people, pretending to tell them what was law, led the House into all these errors they have been guilty of'.⁵⁴ In another act of defiance of the executive power, the assembly had decided that Totterdell was to sail privately to London, without asking for the required permission.⁵⁵ It proved to be an empty threat, as he remained on the island and the assembly was adjourned. Beeston only experienced the beginning of Totterdell's agitation, as he was recalled in 1702. The

⁵⁰ Inventories (JARD, 1B/11/3/10, f. 186).

⁵¹ 'List of election returns' in *JAJ*, i, p. 221.

⁵² 'Deposition of Robert Thurgar, of Port Royal' in *CSP (America & West Indies)* xix, 749 iii. (Aug. 1701).

⁵³ *JAJ*, i, pp 210-19 (parts of the entries are missing for these years).

⁵⁴ 'Governor Sir William Beeston, to the council of trade and plantations' in *CSP (America & West Indies)* xix, 676 (Aug. 1701).

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

confrontation set the tone for future conflicts where Totterdell used the popular support to advance his political profile.

The military commander Thomas Handasyde was appointed the new governor, and arrived in December 1702. He possessed a great deal of experience in military matters and had been stationed in Ireland during the 1690s. He was, for instance, aware of Brodrick's family connections.⁵⁶ Handasyde soon discovered that Totterdell had been 'the same disturber in Beeston's time and some time before that'.⁵⁷ Totterdell was returned to the assembly in 1703 for the parish of St George.⁵⁸ He instantly became the principal opponent of the new governor, who told Totterdell that he 'was a common disturber of the people, and that he, the governor, would be nosed by no impudent fellow, and that he would come up with him'.⁵⁹ In July of the same year, he was summoned to appear in front of Handasyde again to answer allegations that he had insulted the governor in the assembly during the reading of the queen's letter. Totterdell denied this and immediately lodged a petition to that effect on 6 July 1703.⁶⁰ It was a serious allegation that implied a disdain for the representative of the crown. The senior assembly members asked for clarification from Handasyde, who tried to defuse the situation, but the assembly refused to do any business unless told who had informed the governor. When the members met Handasyde in committee, the explanation was given that Totterdell had concealed 'the deputation for the provost-marshal's place, at which the governor was very angry, and told the said Totterdell that he should not be protected by the mob, as he was in Sir William Beeston's time'.⁶¹

Handasyde insisted that he had said nothing about the queen's letter and urged the assembly

⁵⁶ The two were on good personal terms and Handasyde tried to re-appoint Brodrick to the post of attorney general; see 'Mr. Way to Mr. Popple' in *CSP (America & West Indies)* xxiii, 1275 (Jan. 1708).

⁵⁷ There is no evidence that Totterdell was in Jamaica prior to Beeston being governor; see 'Governor Handasyde to the council of trade and plantations' in *CSP (America & West Indies)* xxv, 866 (Jun. 1711).

⁵⁸ *JAJ*, i, 283.

⁵⁹ 'Hugh Totterdell, complained' in *CSP (America & West Indies)* xxi 883 (July 1703).

⁶⁰ *JAJ*, i, 290-91.

⁶¹ *JAJ*, i, 292-93; 'Journal of Assembly of Jamaica' in *CSP (America & West Indies)* xxi, 901 (Jul. 1703); John Hickman had been appointed provost marshal; see 'Minutes of council in assembly of Jamaica' in *CSP (America & West Indies)*, 833 (Jun. 1703).

to continue its work.⁶² For the remainder of the session Totterdell continued to play an active part in proceedings. Although the attorney general tried to prosecute him, the case was eventually dismissed by the Board of Trade for a lack of evidence.

The next meeting of the assembly in May 1704 witnessed a second confrontation between Handasyde and Totterdell. When the committee for quartering met, their chairman, Richard Thompson, asked to be excused. Totterdell refused to allow it and exclaimed that 'I desire I may be likewise excluded, for if anything should go amiss, I shall be rogued and rescaled as before'. Thompson objected and asked Totterdell who had spoken of him in such a way, to which he received the reply 'the governor'. The two had a heated exchange and Totterdell once again displayed little regard for Handasyde's authority. Totterdell argued that 'he was no time-server, that he had rowed against the stream, and found he could pull up against all, and that the first good dinner the governor had in this island, he gave it to him'.⁶³ At the end of the confrontation, Thompson immediately went to the governor, who complained vehemently to the Speaker, who had been summoned to his chambers. After hearing the evidence against him, Totterdell mounted a defence the day after, and apologised, but the entire affair became his undoing and the assembly decided to expel him.⁶⁴ In the months that followed he attempted to regain his seat, but remained barred from the assembly for the remainder of the session. The early political affairs indicated that Totterdell persisted in a confrontational attitude towards the executive power and could count on considerable support in the assembly. In the second part of the decade his powerbase increased, which saw him being elected Speaker.

In July 1705, Totterdell was re-elected to the assembly for the parish of Port Royal and became one of its most prominent and active members. It was during this session that he introduced the 'act to prevent the growth of popery in this island', demonstrating that anti-

⁶² *JAJ*, i, 192-93.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 334 (declaration of colonel Richard Thompson).

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 335.

Catholic feeling still dominated.⁶⁵ Totterdell solidified his political base and became the leader of a faction in the assembly, which opposed the governor at every turn. His proactive attitude appeared to have paid off and his peers elected him Speaker of the assembly in 1706. Unfortunately, his health was now failing and, as 'he lay under great indisposition of body, desired he might have leave to go to England for the recovery of his health'.⁶⁶ His absence gave Handasyde the opportunity to round on Totterdell's supporters and the opposition faction as a whole. Bereft of their leader, the group fell apart and had to reorganise until Totterdell's return towards the end of 1707.

Towards the end of February 1708, Totterdell had a direct conflict with William Brodrick that led to the suspension of the former attorney general. When the members of the assembly and the council met to discuss a bill 'to prevent vexatious suits of law' Totterdell reported back that Brodrick had opposed the bill, while it had passed in the house. When they discussed the affair, the members found that Brodrick was 'guilty of a high misdemeanour, and breach of the trust reposed in him by the house ... a high contempt of the authority of this house and the privileges thereof'.⁶⁷ Soon after, Totterdell was also suspended by the governor for insulting the authorities while defending a case at the Grand Court. Totterdell used his formal legal and popular support to maximum benefit. An indication of this could be found in the election of January 1709 for the abovementioned assembly session, where Totterdell was elected in no less than three separate parishes, of which he had to choose one.⁶⁸ His outspoken reputation undoubtedly played a role in his popular support. As Handasyde's tenure as governor came to an end in 1712, he pointed out that 'all disputes and

⁶⁵ Ibid., 387.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 394.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 447.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 451.

misunderstandings is owing to Mr Totterdall [sic], [who] seems resolved still to continue in his wickedness'.⁶⁹

The last affair that Totterdell was involved in concerned the Dublin-born rear admiral Hovenden Walker. He arrived in the summer of 1712 as the new naval commander of Jamaica and quickly managed to antagonise the new governor, Archibald Hamilton.⁷⁰ The governor noted that 'Admiral Walker has acted with very great indiscretion, [and] found particular friendships with Mr Beckford, Mr Totterdale and Mr Carver'.⁷¹ Walker had been given instructions to combat privateering and found Hamilton a hindrance and incapable of addressing the privateering issue.⁷² Walker's brief had been quite specific, as the British government attempted to appease the Spanish in the region. By December 1712 the conflict between the two men had deteriorated to such an extent that Hamilton sent a letter to Walker asking if he intended to sail for England. The navy commander returned the letter without opening it, setting the scene for a confrontation.⁷³

Walker moved his navy squadron to the western side of the island, enabling him to monitor the privateers who used the Bahamas as a base. The supporters of the governor proceeded to accuse the admiral of obstructing local trade and damaging economic prospects. Walker found growing support in the assembly, especially from Totterdell, who continued to oppose the executive power. Hamilton complained that 'upon the encouragement of Admiral Walker's big words that nobody knows his power, one gentleman, Mr Totterdell, said, "How if Admiral Walker should be declared Governor now, how would they look who had shewn themselves against him"'.⁷⁴ In the event, Totterdell's support base had been diminished and

⁶⁹ 'Governor Handasyde to the Council of Trade and Plantations' in *CSP (America & West Indies)* xv, 866 (June 1711).

⁷⁰ John K. Laughton, 'Walker, Sir Hovenden (1666?-1725)', (rev. J. D. Davies) in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/28487>) (3 June 2014).

⁷¹ 'Governor Lord A. Hamilton to the Lord High Treasurer, Jamaica, Nov. 22, 1712' in *CSP (America & West Indies)* xxvii, 277 xviii (Feb. 1713).

⁷² Laughton, 'Walker, Sir Hovenden'.

⁷³ 'Hamilton to the Lord High Treasurer'.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

he was suspended again from the assembly by December 1712. Eventually the Board of Trade put an end to the conflict by recalling Walker.

Totterdell never fully recovered his position after the Walker episode. His health was failing him and by 1713 he had retreated from public life. On Totterdell's death in March 1715, his inventory listed the contents of his house in Spanish Town and two estates, the Bogg and Water Work plantations.⁷⁵ Both had been brought in by his wife, who, on behalf of her son, became the administrator of the holdings.⁷⁶ Totterdell's period in Jamaican public life showed how the Protestant Irish who came to the island used the legal profession to enter local politics. He managed to improve his social standing through marriage and his colonial experience centred on positioning himself among the white elite. The agitation directed at the authority of the governor characterised his political career and presented similarities to Brodrick's attitude towards Beeston.

III *Edmund Kelly*

With the death of Totterdell and the absence of William Brodrick, a new generation of Protestant Irish began to appear in the 1710s. These included the Kelly brothers from the west of Ireland, who had possibly been brought to the island through their connections with Hugh Totterdell.⁷⁷ Edmund Kelly and his four brothers probably arrived together, which suggests they shared a strong family bond with one another. One brother, John, was collector for the customs during the 1710s, indicating that the profile of the brothers was growing.⁷⁸ John and Edmund both featured as elected representatives, with the latter also serving as Speaker in

⁷⁵ Inventories (JARD, 1B/11/3/10, f. 185).

⁷⁶ By the end of the eighteenth century, Bogg plantation in St Ann had been sold on; see 'Jamaica St Ann 330' (UCL database), while there was no further mention of Water Works.

⁷⁷ 'Extract of letter from Capt. Vernon to Mr. Burchett, 7th Nov. 1720' in *CSP (America & West Indies)* xxxii, 527 iii (June 1721).

⁷⁸ 'Extract of letter from John Kelly, collector of Jamaica' in *CSP (America & West Indies)* xxxi, 341 i (July 1719). Not to be confused with John Kelly, the son of Smith Kelly (see Chapter 4), who by this stage was living in London as a writer.

1719. The other two, Denis and Darcy, were also employed in the legal profession.⁷⁹ The extended family connections provided an Atlantic link as the brothers kept in close contact with the rest of the family based in Galway.⁸⁰ Two sisters remained in Ireland, as well as a number of cousins, who looked after the Irish affairs of the Kelly brothers. The extent of the transatlantic relationships became apparent from the wills of the brothers, where these connections featured regularly.⁸¹ The colonial experience of Edmund Kelly was closely associated with the legal profession, however he had different aspirations compared to his predecessors. He had not been called to the Bar, but appeared to have the adequate legal expertise to be made attorney general. Together with his brothers, Edmund began to obtain property on the island that formed the basis for their wealth. As this case study will demonstrate, he displayed a more accommodating attitude towards the governor during his time on the island.

The eldest of the Kelly brothers, Edmund, was appointed the new attorney general by Governor Hamilton in 1714.⁸² He was soon drawn into a conflict in 1715 between Hamilton and the surveyor general of the Americas, William Keith, who was concerned about the illegal trade and privateering. He complained that the customs clearing administration of Port Royal left much to be desired and demanded action. Hamilton reacted by calling upon Kelly and Brodrick (who was still on the island) to examine Keith's papers of instruction. The two Irishmen quickly concluded that Keith's instructions only applied to North America and

⁷⁹ The fifth brother, Charles Kelly, was a Church of England minister on the island; for further details on Denis Kelly and the family's property holding see Chapter 6.

⁸⁰ After the Williamite Wars, Edmund had received land in the county; see John D'Alton, *King James's Irish army list* (1689) (2 vols, Dublin, 1855) p. 123.

⁸¹ Will of Edmund Kelly of Montpellier, Kingdom of France, 1 Apr. 1728 (National Archives (Kew), PROB 11/621/133); Will of Darcy Kelly, 1730 (IRO, Liber 18, f. 51); Will of Charles Kelly, 1731 (IRO, Liber 18); Will of John Kelly, 1740 (IRO, Liber 22). Transcribed from the original wills by Dianne T. Golding Frankson and listed on aparcelfribbons.co.uk (May 2014).

⁸² 'Governor Lord A. Hamilton to the council of trade and plantations' in *CSP (America & West Indies)* xxvii, 615 (Mar. 1714).

Keith was forced to return to Virginia.⁸³ At this point, Kelly appeared to be under the tutelage of Brodrick, who still owned the patent of the position of attorney general. When Brodrick indicated he was keen to leave the island in 1715, he surrendered the patent and made arrangements to have Edmund Kelly appointed by Hamilton.⁸⁴ When Edmund Kelly was given the patent of attorney general in 1717, it came with the specific stipulation that the holder was to reside on the island.⁸⁵

In replacing William Brodrick permanently, Edmund obtained a key position in the government of the island; this was followed by his election as Speaker of the assembly in 1719.⁸⁶ He had seen how the combination of holding these two positions together had brought William Brodrick benefits, despite the unease about the conflict of interest.⁸⁷ Kelly was slowly drawn into conflict with some of the councillors, who had been appointed by Hamilton. On the issue of a revenue bill, proposed in 1719, the former chief justice Thomas Bernard bitterly complained that ‘the attorney general opposing it with all imaginable bitterness, and saying upon that occasion, that King James had been forced to abdicate for less crimes; it is not at all surprising, a person of his religion should think the introducing of popery a trivial fault’.⁸⁸ Evidently, the ethnic and religious background of the Kelly brothers was well known and highlighted in this case. Bernard’s comments were an example of some of the accusations that were levelled at some of the Protestant Irish, especially those who were suspected of remaining Catholic, despite a nominal conversion. It remained only posturing, however, as Bernard could do little to prevent Kelly from operating under his

⁸³ ‘An account of some disputes between Governor Lord A. Hamilton and William Keith’ in *CSP (America & West Indies)* xxviii, 496 (Sept. 1715).

⁸⁴ ‘Governor Lord A. Hamilton to the council of trade and plantations’ in *CSP (America & West Indies)* xxvii, 664 (May 1714).

⁸⁵ ‘H. M. Warrant appointing Edmund Kelly attorney general of Jamaica, with a clause obliging him to actual residence, and revoking the letters patents of William Broderick’ in *CSP (America & West Indies)* xxix, 623 (Jun. 1717).

⁸⁶ *JAJ*, ii, 296.

⁸⁷ *JAJ*, ii, 175-86.

⁸⁸ ‘Thomas Bernard, a councillor of Jamaica, to John Chetwynd’ in *CSP (America & West Indies)* xxxi, 548 (Feb. 1720).

commission. As the chief justice, he had been closely associated with Brodrick and Hamilton, who had both left the island by the summer of 1717.⁸⁹ The planter Peter Heywood temporarily held the position of governor with support from Kelly, who had steered away from most of the controversy surrounding Hamilton.

In 1720 Sir Nicholas Lawes was appointed as the new governor, supported by a navy squadron, commanded by the future admiral Edward Vernon, to combat piracy. Vernon quickly came into conflict with Kelly over the post of judge of the admiralty, as ‘this gentleman whose name is Savile came from Ireland, and has not been long in this island, and is well known to have but two who are remarkably his friends, Peter Beckford and Edmond Kelly, the attorney general, who I have heard it said, has given it his opinion to Mr Savile under his hand, before he threw up his commission’.⁹⁰ Vernon accused both men of contempt in obstructing the trial of a number of privateers, and quickly found an explanation. ‘I believe the attorney’s reason is, that the two persons I have on board my ship, being both papists, the private directors of his conscience have influenced him to shelter them from justice.’⁹¹ It was unclear who the two Catholics on board of Vernon’s ship were, but the admiral found a link in the Irish identity of Kelly to argue his case. He continued that ‘Major Howard of Brigadier’s Regiment was warned against him [Kelly] by a friend in Ireland as a concealed Papist’.⁹² Vernon continued to accuse the attorney general, ‘fearing I should complain against him, for conniving at the information’ and that ‘in a speech he made to the assembly, above a twelvemonth ago to spirit them up to oppose the payment of Lord Hamilton’s arrears, he said, that one King had lost his head, and another had been abdicated, for less crimes than Lord

⁸⁹ In May 1716 the London government decided to recall governor Hamilton after the Spanish authorities in Cuba complained again about the illegal trade and pirate attacks. With Hamilton and Brodrick gone, the Jamaican planter faction led by the Beckfords took control of local politics; see ‘Memorial of Lord Archibald Hamilton to the King’, *CSP (America & West Indies)* xxx, 109 i-iii (Sept. 1717).

⁹⁰ ‘Extract of letter from Capt. Vernon to Mr. Burchett, 7th Nov. 1720’ in *CSP (America & West Indies)* xxxii, 527 (iii) (June 1721).

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

⁹² *Ibid.*

Hamilton'.⁹³ In his attack on Kelly, Vernon used arguments that painted Kelly as an Irishman with Catholic sympathies who continued to have Jacobite sympathies. Vernon's assertion was at odds with Kelly's brother's position as an Anglican minister on the island. The issue of Mr Savile being appointed judge of the admiralty illustrated the key position that Kelly held. His close association with the Beckford family underlined that he formed part of the white elite on the island. The allegation of having Jacobite sympathies had no consequence for Kelly and his brothers. Under the patent, Edmund continued to hold the position of attorney general for nearly five years. As his health was deteriorating, Edmund moved back to Europe to recover and eventually passed away in France in 1728. The colonial experience of Edmund Kelly became clear in his will, which revealed several property holdings in both Jamaica and Ireland. In contrast to the barristers Totterdell and Brodrick, Kelly displayed a less confrontational attitude. Vernon's sharp accusations had no effect on Kelly's position, as he was supported by the planters in the assembly who had elected him Speaker. The Atlantic connections of the extended Kelly family endured and Edmund's short career on the island was continued by his younger brother Denis, who became chief justice.

The case studies in this chapter illustrate how the Protestant Irish lawyers featured in the white settler society of Jamaica. They held important positions such as attorney general and elected members of the assembly. The William Brodrick case study demonstrates how the approach of obtaining patents and forging political links formed a basis of power. He displayed a degree of mobility by moving to the Leeward Islands and back to Ireland for a period. The presence of a cousin and the attempt to provide his brother-in-law with a position in Jamaica indicates the importance of family connections. Hugh Totterdell did not have these extended family links and carved out a distinct political role as a political agitator. He settled permanently on the island and managed to increase his social standing through

⁹³ Ibid.

marriage, his legal practice and confrontations with the executive power. Whereas Brodrick and Totterdell used their legal expertise, patents and political standing to improve their positions, Edmund Kelly moved into property. Politically he aligned himself to the Beckford family and the planter faction. It marked the beginning of the Protestant Irish involvement in the sugar economy of Jamaica.

6 Irish planters in colonial Jamaica

In the early eighteenth century, the Irish in Jamaica began to obtain property and entered the plantation business. The Protestant Irish professionals, such as the lawyers featured in the previous chapter, invested in sugar plantations that will feature in the case studies in this chapter. It will investigate the degree of success that the Irish in Jamaica had in the plantation business. The accumulation of wealth from the plantations relied directly on the enslaved labour force. The case studies will examine the links with Ireland, the extended family involvement, litigation and the involvement in the institution of slavery. They will examine the different colonial experiences of the Irish planters in Jamaica during the eighteenth century and their relationship with the enslaved.

The case studies will present the examples of the Arcedeckne, Kelly and Burke families. They will highlight how they retained their Irish connections and their relationship with the white settler community, and will outline how they acquired the properties and managed them. The first will consider the development of the Arcedeckne family's Golden Grove plantation, followed by the holdings that Denis Kelly acquired after the passing of his brothers.¹ A third section will consider the fragmented holding of the extended Burke family from the west of Ireland, who arrived in Jamaica during the middle of the eighteenth century. Less wealthy than the Protestant Irish Arcedeckne and Kelly families, they purchased smaller parcels of land. These three case studies will also further illustrate the Irish involvement in the institution of slavery.

¹ The Jamaica Archives contain details on the properties held by both the Arcedeckne and Kelly families, while the Westport papers held at the National Library of Ireland contain most of the Kelly-related material pertaining to Jamaica. The first decade of the Arcedeckne correspondence was published in 'The letters of Simon Taylor of Jamaica to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 1765-1775' ed. Betty Wood in *Camden Miscellany*, xxxv (2002), pp 1-164; the originals are part of the Vanneck-Arcedeckne Papers held at the Cambridge University Library.

I *The Arcedeckne family*

This case study presents the Protestant Irish Arcedeckne family who owned the Golden Grove plantation in Jamaica. It will outline how they obtained the property and how they managed to develop it over the course of the eighteenth century. It will also investigate their links with Ireland. On occasion the property featured in litigation, which revealed the extended family presence in Jamaica. The case study will illustrate the Arcedeckne family's involvement in the institution of slavery upon which a sugar plantation such as Golden Grove relied. The acreage of the plantation was bought by Andrew Arcedeckne, who was born in 1681 in Carrowmore, Co. Galway. He entered Gray's Inn in 1710 and was called to the Bar, before moving to Jamaica some time after 1714.² As a law professional Andrew had arrived on the island with the clear purpose of having a professional career and his legal opinion was often sought, especially in relation to property.³ A number of family members also settled on the island, including Daniel Arcedeckne and the sisters Sarah and Mary.⁴ Andrew married the Jamaican-born Elizabeth Kearsey, his housekeeper, and had two children, Chaloner and Anne.⁵ In 1717, he bought the first of several tracts of land in the parish of St Thomas in the East, which was developed into the Golden Grove plantation (see map 1).⁶

² There are some noted mentions of the Arcedeckne name in Co. Galway, twice the name Redmond (1675 and 1724) and Nicholas (1776), see Arthur Vicars, *Index to the prerogative wills of Ireland 1536-1810* (Dublin, 1897), p. 9 and Joseph Foster, *The register of admissions to Gray's Inn 1521-1889* (London, 1889), p. 357.

³ 'Case involving the property of Patience Hall – opinion by Andrew Arcedeckne, 1 August 1747' in Hall family papers and sugar plantation records (UC San Diego, Digital collections, Hall Family Papers, MSS 220).

⁴ Richard Dunn found the grave of Sarah Arcedeckne (d. 1737) on the Mesopotamia plantation in the parish of Westmoreland and a mention of her sister Mary; see Richard S. Dunn, *A tale of two plantations: slave life and labor in Jamaica and Virginia* (Harvard, 2014), p. 9.

⁵ Andrew Arcedeckne's wife Elizabeth, who survived him by seven years, made a will that resulted in some controversy during the last years of her life. Simon Taylor described one of the unnamed executors as 'great a villain as ever was hang'd', and feared that the man might be able to take control of Elizabeth's inheritance; see 'Letters of Simon Taylor', ed. Wood, pp 107-10.

⁶ Today, the settlement of Golden Grove still exists and can be found north-east of Port Morant in the parish of St Thomas, where sugar is still being produced; see 'Seprod's Golden Grove estate to market its own sugar', *The Gleaner* (2 Sept. 2015).

Although his main plantation was on the eastern side of the island, Arcedeckne continued to live in Spanish Town, where he focused on his legal practice and local politics.⁷ He was an active member of the assembly and was first elected for the parish of St Catherine in 1718.⁸ Other family members, including Robert Arcedeckne and Mathias Arcedeckne, also took their seats in the assembly.⁹ In spite of being a successful attorney and planter, Andrew Arcedeckne was accused by some of his adversaries of being a Roman Catholic. There was some indication that he had converted to the established church some time in the seventeenth century, a not uncommon practice.¹⁰ He vehemently denied being Catholic in a statement to the assembly, where the members supported him.¹¹ Andrew was one of the longest serving legislators but was never offered a position on the council. Perhaps his religious affiliation continued to be considered suspect, although there was never another formal mention of it. He did not involve himself in the political conflicts of the assembly, although he largely sided with the other planters in the assembly. This was in contrast to the other Irish lawyers like Broderick and Totterdell, who were more opportunistic in their manoeuvrings. It was likely that the clientele of his legal practice consisted mostly of fellow planters. The ownership of the Golden Grove plantation and his legal practice indicated that Andrew intended to permanently remain in Jamaica. However, he was able to send his children to England to be educated, where they became part of the West Indian elite. In this case study, the focus will be on the acquisition and management of the Golden Grove plantation and the tentative Irish connections that the family retained.

⁷ Arcedeckne was listed as attorney general, however no reference to a patent was found. He perhaps worked under Edmund Kelly's patent when he arrived in 1716 for a year and maybe did so again in the 1720s; see Barry W. Higman, *Plantation Jamaica 1750-1850: capital and control in a colonial economy* (Kingston, 2005), p. 147.

⁸ *JAJ*, ii, 254.

⁹ Matthias died in 1731; see *ibid.*, 78.

¹⁰ Thomas P. Power, 'Conversions among the legal profession in Ireland in the eighteenth century' in Daire Hogan and W. N. Osborough (eds), *Brehons, serjeants and attorneys* (Dublin, 1990), pp 153-74.

¹¹ *JAJ*, ii, 732-734; 'Arcedeckne, Chaloner' in Sir Lewis Namier and John Brooke, *The House of Commons 1754-1790* (3 vols, London, 1964), p. 26.

Situated on the far eastern part of the island, close to the town of Port Morant, the valley around the Plantain Garden River was a remote location and almost a day's travel from Kingston. The area had been left largely under-developed for most of the seventeenth century, with the exception of Stokes Hall.¹² Its position was unusual, as it was the only east-facing valley on the island with the main river flowing into Holland Bay. The area proved to be fertile and during the eighteenth century the number of plantations steadily grew. A network of canals was constructed to supply the various parcels with water, although this also increased the risk of flooding during the wet season. The southern slope of the river, where Golden Grove is situated, has a lower incline compared to the steeper northern side. The Arcedecknes later also purchased Bachelor's Hall on the northern side, which they used as a cattle pen.¹³ These two holdings in St Thomas in the East were Andrew's main focus in the development of his plantation business in the decade that followed. He continued to purchase parcels in the parishes of St Elizabeth, St James and St Mary but these were generally sold on.¹⁴ Additionally, he received a number of properties as escheats during his period as attorney general.¹⁵ Andrew concentrated his efforts on Golden Grove apparently with the assistance of Patrick Taylor. Scottish by birth, Taylor owned the Lyssons plantation in nearby Morant Bay and in all likelihood suggested the purchase to Arcedeckne. It was the beginning of a long-term connection between the two families. Upon Patrick's death in 1759, the Arcedeckne family owed him a sizeable debt and soon after Simon Taylor became the

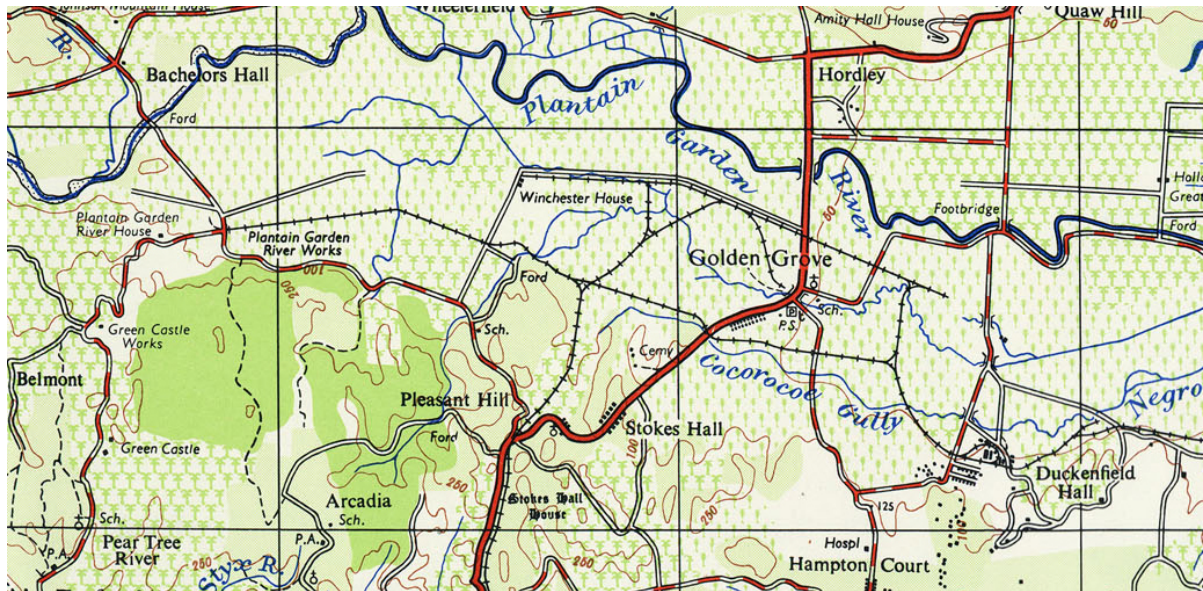
¹² A reference to Luke Stokes, who arrived in the late seventeenth century from Nevis to settle on the island; see Edward Long, *History of Jamaica* (3 vols, London, 1774) ii, pp 158-59 and 'Letters of Simon Taylor', p. 55.

¹³ For an aerial photograph and detailed description of the valley and its properties, see Barry W. Higman, *Jamaica surveyed: plantation maps and plans of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries* (Kingston, 2001), pp 125-28.

¹⁴ These varied in size, and included 1000 acres in St Elizabeth and St James to 330 acres in St Mary; see Index to patents, vol i (1661-1826), (JARD), ledger 16, f. 135, ledger 18, f. 145, ledger 19, f. 177, ledger 20, f. 67, 105, 139, ledger 21, p. 40, ledger 24, p. 33, ledger 25, p. 131.

¹⁵ This was a common practice in the colonies for land that had been forfeited, either through bankruptcy or death without a will or issue. The patent was temporarily passed to the Crown and was held by the attorney general before its legal position was clarified and sold off. See Alexander Aikman, *Laws of Jamaica 1680 – 1792* (Spanish Town, 1802), p. 237.

attorney for the estate.¹⁶ By 1755 the name Golden Grove was not yet established, and the acreage was described as ‘Archdeacons’ on Patrick Browne’s map.¹⁷ The short description of the patent only identified the land as ‘east of Plantain Garden River’ and the 300 acres purchased.¹⁸



(Map 1) Part of St Thomas in the East with Bachelor’s Hall, Golden Grove and Duckenfield Hall

© 1971 Survey Department Jamaica.

When Andrew died in 1763, his only son inherited the Golden Grove plantation.¹⁹ Other than his father’s family, Chaloner Arcedeckne had no clear connection with Ireland and was sent to England, where he was educated at Eton. He was studying at Christ Church, Oxford, when his father died, and briefly returned to Jamaica to settle his affairs. As second-generation Protestant Irish, who grew up in Jamaica, his relationship with Ireland was remote. Chaloner was not perceived as being Irish, nor did he practise law on the island, like his father. Instead, he became part of the absentee West Indian planter class in London and relied

¹⁶ R. B. Sheridan, ‘Simon Taylor, sugar tycoon of Jamaica, 1740-1813’ in *Agricultural History*, xlv (Oct. 1971), pp 285-96.

¹⁷ As was customary in Scotland, see Patrick Browne, *A new map of Jamaica* (London, 1755).

¹⁸ Patents (JARD, 1B/11/1/16, f. 135).

¹⁹ Both Andrew’s wife Elizabeth and daughter Anna survived him. Anna married Dr Benjamin Cowell, who often provided insurance for the Golden Grove shipments, and lived in London until her death in 1803; see ‘Letters of Simon Taylor’, p. 7.

on the revenue of his sugar and rum exports. He did inherit his father's interest in politics and was twice elected to the House of Commons.²⁰ He also briefly sat in the assembly for the parish of St Catherine in 1764.²¹ Chaloner made sure he was kept very well informed of the developments at the Golden Grove plantation, his main source of income. After securing his inheritance, he saw no reason to remain in Jamaica, especially as he struggled with his health. Like many absentee planters in England, Chaloner relied on a network of people to look after his interests there and maintained a variety of West Indian connections in London. He corresponded regularly with much of his extended family, who remained on the island, including his mother Elizabeth and a number of cousins. He also maintained regular correspondence with many others, like his agent Simon Taylor, a fellow Etonian and substantial planter in his own right. Taylor related most of the business information, political gossip, legal matters and family news to Chaloner. His mother continued to reside in Spanish Town until her death and maintained an active interest in the family plantations. Although he displayed no real interest in Ireland, Chaloner did retain links with family members in Co. Galway.²²

An illustration of Chaloner's connections was the employment of John Kelly at Golden Grove.²³ As the main overseer on the plantation, Kelly featured regularly in the Taylor-Arcedeckne correspondence and was of great importance to Chaloner, who, on occasion, wrote to him directly.²⁴ Kelly successfully managed the day-to-day running of the plantation for the absent owner, and together with Simon Taylor and Chaloner's mother

²⁰ Namier and Brooke, *The House of Commons*, p. 26; it would not be unreasonable to conclude that Arcedeckne would have sided with Burke in opposition, which would explain why he left politics in 1780 upon Burke's defeat.

²¹ *JAJ*, v, 468, 525.

²² There was a Nicholas Arcedeckne, a possible relation in Co. Galway and the Bourke family; see *The parliamentary register* (3 vols, Dublin, 1790) iii, p. 138.

²³ Wood notes an Irish connection through a James Kelly in Ireland who supplied Golden Grove with provisions; see 'Letters of Simon Taylor', p. 54.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 90.

managed the Golden Grove plantation.²⁵ Kelly's tenure would last from 1763 to 1783 and was not without controversy. Although highly valued and 'exceedingly well paid', Kelly, who was the only one to reside on the plantation, often found himself at odds with Taylor.²⁶ Like other overseers he was accused of taking advantage of his position, with Taylor alleging that Kelly had '[n]ever given you any rent for 100 acres of your land that he occupies exclusive of the 50 acres you gave him for life'.²⁷ The enslaved Africans owned by John Kelly were also put to work on Golden Grove and he allegedly received a better rate there than from hiring them out to other plantation owners. He also ensured that they were well treated, and Taylor accused Kelly of taking for his own a large share of the rations that were intended for all the enslaved on Golden Grove.²⁸

Besides Kelly, a number of other Irishmen featured on the Arcedeckne properties. One of them was Richard Burke, described as an overseer at Golden Grove, who died aged thirty-three in 1745. He left his parents and siblings back in Lissduff, Co. Galway, a sum of money each.²⁹ Burke was buried at Port Morant and his will does not mention any Jamaican beneficiaries, indicating that he had arrived recently.³⁰ In addition to Golden Grove, the Arcedeckne family also owned the cattle pen, Batchelor's Hall, in the same parish, where the overseer was one Michael Kearney.³¹ Taylor mentioned Kearney on occasion and he generally was found to be a suitable employee. In 1773 he was listed as a collecting constable

²⁵ Ibid., 52-54.

²⁶ He was paid £866 19s. 7d. 'for salary and negroe hire' and was given 1/5 of the commission on the estate of £58 13s. 8 d; see 'Letters of Simon Taylor', p. 116.

²⁷ Ibid., 135.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ He left them £100 each. The family was noted to be from Sissduffe in Co. Galway, which probably was Lissduff, considering one of his uncles lived in Catlebin, a few miles east. There might have been a connection with the wider Kelly family mentioned in section ii of this chapter, but this is not clear from the sources.

³⁰ 'Probated will of Richard Burke, 14 Nov. 1745' (IRO, L.O.S. 25, f. 44).

³¹ In 1766, Kearney was mentioned as a possible witness in the court case of Edward Meighan, who was accused of being part of the 'Whiteboy' movement, a rural uprising in Ireland at the time. In the evidence, it was reported that Kearney had left for Jamaica two years prior. See *Gentleman's and London Magazine* (June 1766), p. 372.

in the parish.³² Eventually, Taylor won the power struggle and Kelly was dismissed at the start of 1783 and died in December 1790.³³ The case of Andrew Arcedeckne in Jamaica illustrated how the Protestant Irish law professionals became plantation owners. It also demonstrated how his son established himself as a West Indian absentee planter based in England. The links with Ireland remained a feature in the development of Golden Grove. However, after the death of Andrew, litigation and difficulties around the inheritance involved the extended Arcedeckne family.

As noted, Andrew Arcedeckne had a number of relations in Jamaica who were set to benefit after his death. In the early eighteenth century, Andrew had been joined by Daniel Arcedeckne, who had kept a low profile and appears to have been less successful as his health deteriorated.³⁴ Daniel also purchased property, albeit small, on the island and represented the parish of St Mary in the assembly in 1719.³⁵ Daniel's son, Robert Arcedeckne, inherited these properties and also sat in the assembly for the parish of St Ann in the 1750s.³⁶ He died in 1768 in North America.³⁷ Robert still had links with Ireland and part of his will left money on a mortgage he had with his brother Nicholas. Andrew's estate was split three ways, with a plantation in St David given to his daughter Anne, Robert Arcedeckne receiving the Fontabelle estate in St Mary and Chaloner Golden Grove. The inheritance caused a few legal issues for the wider family towards the second half of the eighteenth century.³⁸ When Robert Arcedeckne died, the question of who was to inherit

³² W. A. Feurtado, *Official and other personages of Jamaica, from 1655 to 1790* (Kingston, 1896), p. 50.

³³ 'Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 5 December 1790' in 'Correspondence and papers of West Indian Agents, 1765-1848', Vanneck-Arcedeckne papers, Cambridge University Library.

³⁴ Possibly a younger brother or cousin, the records lack any detailed information on him and the patent for the land in Westmoreland is missing, see (JARD, 1/B/11/1/17, f. 4)

³⁵ *JAJ*, ii, 299.

³⁶ *JAJ*, v, 250, 290.

³⁷ Simon Taylor mentioned that Robert had travelled to New York for his health and died there; see 'Letters of Simon Taylor', pp 64, 71. In 1767 Robert was tasked with 'making and continuing a carriage-road, from Guy's Hill road to the settlements of Bagnal's and from thence to the sea at Oracabessa in St. Mary's'. Two years later when the accounts are made up for 1768 he is referred to as 'the late Robert Arcedeckne'; see *JAJ*, vi, 145, 201-02.

³⁸ For details on later chancery cases filed around the inheritance see Higman, *Plantation Jamaica*, p. 173.

Golden Grove became more pressing, as there was no direct heir to the fortune. As long as Chaloner remained unmarried, another cousin residing on the island, Nicholas Bourke, was the most likely candidate. He had already inherited the Fontabelle estate from Robert, but there could be other claimants.³⁹ This left the probability that the inheritance of Golden Grove would become the subject of a lengthy court case and Taylor kept pressing upon Chaloner the necessity of marriage. The precarious situation was exacerbated by a rumour that ‘a gentleman from Ireland, one squire B[o]urke, came over about three weeks ago as some people say to take possession of Golden Grove. I’d caution’d Kelly about him but since that time they say he came to take possession of Robin’s estate’.⁴⁰ It appeared that the unnamed Bourke eventually left empty-handed, but the lure of the prized possession of Jamaican property had evidently been regarded as worth the cost of the journey. Although the conflict of ownership within the extended Bourke family was resolved when Chaloner married and produced an heir, questions over the Arcedeckne property remained. Similarly, when Nicholas Arcedeckne, a cousin in Ireland, died in 1767 there was confusion over his will and who in the family would inherit the land he held in St Mary.⁴¹ Taylor organised a ‘commission for examining Mr Luke B[o]urke’, a potential heir, as recommended by the attorney general Richard Welsh, a friend of the family.⁴² The affair became a part of a lengthy legal process that was drawn to a conclusion only a number of years later, when the patent was sold.

Minor disputes over landownership and the use of resources could also result in expensive lawsuits. In one case, Simon Taylor continually advised Chaloner to negotiate rather than litigate in relation to a claim over ninety acres near the mouth of the Plantain

³⁹ ‘Letters of Simon Taylor’, p. 71

⁴⁰ Ibid., 16-17.

⁴¹ Ibid., 40-41.

⁴² Ibid., 59.

Garden River.⁴³ The dispute originated in a lack of detail on the original patent for Golden Grove, although proper surveys were now being carried out. Much of the buildings, drawings and right of way had been established in the middle of the eighteenth century but the absence of specific records concerning ownership brought on litigation.⁴⁴ In many ways, Golden Grove was a victim of its own success, with two mills running at full capacity under Kelly's stewardship. It was using a great deal of water, which meant that the other successful estates around the Plantation Garden River had to manage with less. This invariably caused resentment.⁴⁵ The legacy of Robert Arcedeckne was bound up in a number of legal issues as part of his estate went to lawyers still resolving disputes, according to Taylor.⁴⁶ Robert's estate Fontabelle eventually came into the hands of Nicholas Bourke, his nephew.⁴⁷

The Arcedeckne family and the Golden Grove plantation made extensive use of the enslaved, which was highlighted by the Simon Taylor letters. Kelly used the workforce available to him to its full potential, something that added to his reputation but which was detrimental to the black population on Golden Grove.⁴⁸ Kelly's success came at a cost, and while Taylor insisted on having a high-volume return, he found that enslaved owned by Arcedeckne suffered as a result. After Kelly's departure, Taylor inspected the plantation himself and found the enslaved to be malnourished and exhausted, and he accused the overseer of having worked them too hard. The flaws of the system of enforced labour were all too obvious and Taylor recognised that overworking the enslaved was one aspect that

⁴³ The acreage was small but it provided access to running water, essential for keeping the mills running. The issue took a number of years to resolve and towards the end Taylor was no longer on speaking terms with the claimant, a Mr Cussans. In 1774 things went so far that Taylor attempted to prevent the Speaker of the assembly, Phillip Pinnock, from giving evidence against Chaloner. The case continued for a number of years and Taylor reported on it regularly. *Ibid.*, 106-07.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 128-29.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 139.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 71.

⁴⁷ His son Thomas Bourke was listed as the owner of Fontabelle and Spicy Grove in the parish of St Mary; see 'Givings-In for the different parishes' in *Jamaica almanac* (1811).

⁴⁸ 'Letters of Simon Taylor' pp 118-32.

abolitionists often touched upon.⁴⁹ The attitude of the Arcedeckne family towards the institution of slavery is not immediately obvious from the sources; however, from their actions it appears they fell into line with the rest of the planter class.⁵⁰ One of the doctors employed by Kelly had fathered three children by Catherine, one of the enslaved on Golden Grove. The doctor, Collins, had stipulated in his will that freedom for all should be bought for his offspring.⁵¹ On the death of the executor of Collins' will, the issue came to light and Chaloner's mother wanted to settle the affair quickly and she 'was anxious about the matter for the children to be free'.⁵²

In 1772 Taylor had purchased a number of enslaved for Golden Grove and a year later found that '16 or 17 of them' had yaws, for which he sent them to a drier part of the island.⁵³ Kelly, the overseer, also had a jobbing gang, and was keen to sell some to the Arcedecknes. They were valued by the Irish planter Joseph Orr for the total sum of £8714.⁵⁴ Taylor decided to proceed with purchase and the large amount (paid over four years) was underwritten by bonds from Chaloner's mother and aunt, from Taylor himself and from the merchant house of Liang in Kingston. Taylor argued that the purchase was essential 'to enlarge your crop and save your capital' and also recommended that if the family obtained '20 young negroes annually you will find your income yearly increasing more than sufficient to pay for them'.⁵⁵ John Kelly also kept Chaloner informed of any problems with the enslaved on Golden Grove, although from the correspondence there appeared to be relatively few problems.⁵⁶ Kelly's

⁴⁹ Ibid., 73-74.

⁵⁰ Golden Grove was listed as having 682 enslaved; see 'Givings-in for the different parishes' in *Jamaica almanac* (1811).

⁵¹ A doctor on a Jamaican plantation would have had only rudimentary means at his disposal. See Dave Gosse, 'Health conditions on selected plantations in Jamaica in the early nineteenth century' in *Journal of Caribbean History*, xl (2006), pp 215-34.

⁵² 'Letters of Simon Taylor', pp 107-08.

⁵³ New arrivals often had to be "seasoned" to avoid disease and prepare them for the enforced labour on the plantations. See Gosse, 'Health conditions in Jamaica' pp 215-34.

⁵⁴ Orr was originally from Co. Tyrone, Ireland and owned the Springfield and Cambridge plantation in St Thomas in the East. In 1790 he was listed as one of the masters extraordinary in the court of Chancery.

⁵⁵ 'Letters of Simon Taylor', pp 126-27.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 124-26.

work had not gone unnoticed and in 1774 he was also appointed attorney for neighbouring Duckenfield Hall, which was partly owned by Arnold Nesbitt, a London merchant of Irish descent.⁵⁷

The use of the enslaved on Golden Grove and Bachelor's Hall illustrated how the Arcedeckne family became part of the white planter elite by the middle of the eighteenth century. Whereas Andrew moved to Jamaica with a view to beginning a career in law, it was the purchase of a plantation that formed the basis for the wealth the second generation obtained. This extended through to his cousin Robert's legacy and that of his nephew Nicholas Bourke. Andrew appeared to have connections with the other Irish on the island, like, for instance, the tailor Hanigan in Port Royal and the other Protestant Irish lawyers, such as Edmund Kelly. In essence, Andrew achieved two things: the informal restrictions placed on him due to the doubts around religious affiliation were eliminated with regard to his son, and he managed to solidify his position through property that underpinned the wealth of his wider family. It was a legacy that continued well into the nineteenth century, when his grandson, also called Andrew, received large amounts of compensation for the enslaved at both Bachelor's Hall and Golden Grove. This amounted to £2004 11s.10d. for 116 enslaved and £6320 17s.10 d. for 200 enslaved respectively.⁵⁸ The case study illustrated how a Protestant Irish family with Catholic origins entered the plantation business successfully to form part of the white elite on the island.

II *The Kelly family*

The Protestant Irish Kelly family consolidated their wealth through the purchase of land holding and developing two plantations in Jamaica. They managed a sugar plantation, Cocoa Walk, and a cattle pen that bore the family name. As the previous chapter outlined, the Kelly

⁵⁷ The plantation had been founded by John Dukingfield, a Bristol merchant.

⁵⁸ St Thomas-in-the-East, Surrey 118 (Golden Grove) and St Thomas-in-the-East, Surrey 142 (Bachelor's Hall Pen) (UCL Database).

brothers arrived in Jamaica to take up a number of legal positions.⁵⁹ All acquired property and worked closely with the planter class.⁶⁰ They also maintained a number of transatlantic connections, with one brother and two sisters who had remained in Ireland. Like the Arcedecknes, their origins were in Co. Galway, where the Kelly family had traditionally been landowners.⁶¹ As with many white settlers, climate and disease took their toll, with only one brother living to old age. The Kelly brothers' close association with the Beckford family was evident in the wills of both Edmund and Denis Kelly.⁶² Edmund's political career lasted only a decade but his younger brother Denis would combine his position of chief justice and assembly member. As the case study will illustrate, he managed to secure the inheritance of his brothers and retained a connection with Ireland. As with Golden Grove, Cocoa Walk relied on enslaved labour to function.⁶³

During his career, Edmund obtained 300 acres of land close to that of his friend Peter Beckford in the parish of St Dorothy.⁶⁴ He also married into an established Jamaican family, the Fullers, who owned the Thetford estate in St John.⁶⁵ After Edmund's death, his son Henry was lost at sea, which meant that most of Edmund's property was divided between his brothers.⁶⁶ In his will, he noted that he had already given the two plantations in Jamaica to his brother Charles, but had many debts outstanding as he had been 'subject to many incidents in Jamaica', possibly a reference to the hurricanes that had devastated the island in 1722 and

⁵⁹ The abovementioned John Kelly on Golden Grove appears to be unrelated. One of the brothers had the same name, but was an Anglican minister on the island; see Gerald Fothergill, *A list of emigrant ministers to America 1690-1811* (London, 1904), p. 39; Patents (JARD, 1B/11/1/16, f. 174).

⁶⁰ An overview of the Kelly family holdings, as featured in the paintings of Isaac M. Belisario (1795-1849), can be found in Jackie Ranston, *Belisario: sketches of character* (Kingston, 2008).

⁶¹ The Lisduff estate near Tynagh, Co. Galway.

⁶² Will of Edmund Kelly of Montpellier, Kingdom of France, 1 Apr. 1728 (National Archives (Kew), PROB 11/621/133) as transcribed on <http://aparclofribbons.co.uk/apr/items/show/12> (28 Jan. 2013).

⁶³ See section ii in Chapter 9 on the Kelly plantations and slavery.

⁶⁴ Inventories (JARD, 1B/11/1/11, f. 103; 1B/11/18, f. 19).

⁶⁵ North east of Old Harbour, in 1836 £6057 9s.3d. was claimed for 291 enslaved; see St John 62 (Thetford Estate) (UCL database).

⁶⁶ In a letter from Thomas Beckford (cousin of Peter Beckford Jnr) to Denis Kelly, the latter was told that Edmund's son Henry was sent back to Jamaica after he was found to engage in criminal behaviour in England; Letter from Thomas Beckford, 13 Dec. 1740 (N.L.I., Westport papers, MS 40,910/5 (5)).

1726.⁶⁷ A small estate in Co. Galway was leased to a cousin, Denis Daly,⁶⁸ while the Jamaican possessions eventually all came into the hands of Denis Kelly. The 1720s had not been kind to the Kelly brothers and the natural disasters combined with political turmoil had severely reduced their influence. By the following decade, only one remained of the five brothers that had moved to the island.

The youngest, Denis, managed to survive in Jamaica and in 1740 obtained the powerful position of chief justice. He was described as ‘well bred and complaisant’ and ‘acceptable to the best of the island, by his knowledge of the law, so that he was a man of weight’.⁶⁹ Like Edmund, he had been a prominent member of the assembly in the decade before his appointment. When exactly Denis came to the island is not clear, however it seems likely this was some time in the early 1720s.⁷⁰ He continued to side with the Beckford family, and supported the planters under Governor Trelawny. Despite losing his brothers, Denis stayed and married Pricilla Halstead in 1725.⁷¹ By the end of the 1720s, he had inherited most of the land patents from his brothers, while his own daughter Elizabeth would move to Ireland and marry into the local gentry. When Denis came into the possession of his brother’s lands and mortgages he was forced to embark on a lengthy period of litigation to assert his rights to the inheritance.⁷² His legal position and good standing among the elite made the consolidation of his property portfolio a success. Denis eventually returned to Ireland in the 1750s. It appeared that he spent little time on his plantations, but instead resided in Spanish Town, where the courts held their sessions. Little survives that explains the day-to-day

⁶⁷ Matthew Mulcahy, ‘Weathering the storms: hurricanes and risk in the British Greater Caribbean’ in *Business History Review*, vol. lxxviii (2004), pp 635-63.

⁶⁸ Possibly Denis Daly of Carrownekelly, Co. Galway, former judge and privy councillor to James II. See Eoin Kinsella, ‘Denis Daly (c. 1638-1721)’ in *Dictionary of Irish biography* (dib.cambridge.org/articleId=a2372) (May 2014).

⁶⁹ James Smith, *A letter from a friend at Jamaica* (London, 1747), pp 10-12.

⁷⁰ There was mention of a Denis Kelly elected to the Irish parliament for a Co. Westmeath constituency in 1713-14 but it is unclear if this was the same individual (E. M. Johnston-Liik, *History of Irish parliament 1692-1800* (6 vols, Belfast, 2007) vi, p. 41).

⁷¹ She was born in 1700 and the daughter of Col John Halstead, her brother was Matthew Halstead; see *St. Catherine parish register, 1669-1825* (2 vols) i, p. 136.

⁷² Case John Humphrey v Denis Kelly and others, c. 1749 (N.L.I., Westport papers, MS 40,910/6).

running of the estates. In contrast to the other Irish on the island, the Kelly family managed to build their reputation on their connections among the elite and by prestige.

Whereas Andrew Arcedeckne found his land on the far-eastern side of the island, the Kelly brothers stayed within the more traditional planting areas. The Spanish had originally settled the plains on the southern side of the island and westward of Spanish Town. In contrast to the wet areas of St Thomas in the East, these parts were relatively dry, and better suited for planting. Generally the Irish had not been able to settle here as most of these lands had been patented in the sixteenth century under the governorship of Sir Thomas Modyford. Denis Kelly managed two properties. The first, Kelly's, was situated just off Bowers Gully near the town of Old Harbour in St Dorothy.⁷³ While close to the coast, the plantation was also close to a small river, which rendered the acreage suitable for cattle grazing and growing sugarcane. Paintings by Isaac Belisario demonstrated that both the main house and the sugar works were still operational in 1836.⁷⁴ In contrast, the Cocoa Walk plantation was further inland and higher up the mountain. The hillier terrain made the planting of sugarcane more difficult, but the cooler temperature brought a better sugar crop and provisions were easier to grow.⁷⁵ An inventory of the estate made upon the death of Darcy Kelly in 1730 listed 64 male and 105 female enslaved on the Cocoa Walk plantation, while the description of the buildings demonstrated the large scale of operation.⁷⁶ Darcy's will indicated that he resided on the plantation in the hills, despite representing Port Royal in the assembly. He possibly moved to the plantation house to improve his health, as the port town generally was a hotbed of disease. There was perhaps another Irish connection as in his will Darcy referred to his overseer as

⁷³ Now in the parish of St Catherine, the area of the plantation is just outside the town of Moore's Pen, situated fourteen miles south-west of Spanish Town.

⁷⁴ The foundations of the Kelly estate still remain, see Ranston, *Belisario*, p. 202.

⁷⁵ The use of the word 'walk' generally indicated a plantation or grove of trees, in this case cocoa trees. Contemporary descriptions mainly favoured mountain estates because of the easy access to wood and soil not as hard. See William Beckford, *A descriptive account of the island of Jamaica* (2 vols, London, 1790), i, p. 169.

⁷⁶ 'Letter from [Edmond Kelly], Montpellier, to 'My dear Major', 25 Aug. 1727 (N.L.I., Westport Papers, MS 40,910/2, ff 25-6).

James Lynch. However, little is known about Lynch's origins.⁷⁷ As with the other Kelly brothers, Denis was left 'settling his affairs'.⁷⁸

When Denis Kelly was eventually sidelined politically towards the end of the 1740s, he decided to leave the island and returned to Ireland. He took with him a large number of papers relating to his property in Jamaica, presumably to retain control over them and pass them on.⁷⁹ He had also managed the family lands held in Lisaduff, Co. Galway and settled there, possibly to be close to his daughter Elizabeth. The documents in relation to these properties showed the extent of his family network.⁸⁰ Through marriage into the Halstead family, he had become embroiled in a legal issue surrounding the Savanna Pen in Westmoreland. This was a family dispute between the wife of Denis and his sister-in-law that played out for much of the 1740s.⁸¹ Nonetheless, he had managed during that decade to consolidate the property portfolio amassed by his brothers and by himself. It was later calculated at almost 20,000 acres, held among different parcels and patents on the island.⁸² Besides Cocoa Walk and Kelly's described above, Denis Kelly owned acreage in St Thomas in the Vale, St Mary and St George.⁸³ Like many property owners, he did not have the financial means to develop a large number of plantations. Instead he bought and sold them to support his ongoing developments. One example was Goffe's plantation in St Thomas that somehow came into Denis's hands by 1740. This holding, of some 1,000 acres, was evidently a working plantation and listed 140 enslaved present together with 30 mules. There were no further references to Goffe's in the Westport papers as it was probably sold prior to Denis's

⁷⁷ Will of James Lynch, 1731 (IRO, Register of Wills, Liber 18).

⁷⁸ Will of Darcy Kelly, 1730 (IRO, Liber 18, f. 51) as transcribed on <http://www.aparcelofribbons.co.uk/apr/items/show/11> (May 2014).

⁷⁹ See Sean Murphy, 'The Sligo Papers, Westport House, Co. Mayo: a report' in *Analecta Hibernica*, xxxiii (1986), pp 15, 17-46.

⁸⁰ Thomas Beckford to Denis Kelly (N.L.I., Westport papers, MS 40,910/5).

⁸¹ 'Legal papers' (N.L.I., Westport papers, MS 40,910/90).

⁸² 'List of the Jamaican estates in Denis Kelly's possession in 1740 compiled by Lord Arthur H Browne', (N.L.I., Westport Papers, MS 41,058/7 (1-21)).

⁸³ Quit rent books (1754) (National Archives, Kew, CO 142/31).

death.⁸⁴ As most lands had already been patented when the Kelly brothers arrived in Jamaica, they bought the patents and managed them until they were sold. These patents were often contested, and Denis set out to establish their origin and the price paid, to prove that he owned the parcels. From these documents, it became clear that the Fuller family had originally patented the lands that became Cocoa Walk.⁸⁵ The Fullers were one of the first settlers on the island and Thomas Fuller had been a prominent planter and local politician. The parish of St Dorothy was where Denis had the majority of his interests and he represented the parish for most of his life in the assembly. This was confirmed in his will, where he stipulated that a good well and cistern was to be built in the town of Old Harbour in the parish and that a house for the rector was to be built for £200 ‘current money of Jamaica’.⁸⁶ His daughter Elizabeth inherited the vast majority of the Kelly fortune in Jamaica, although he made sure that at the time of her marriage, a stringent set of regulations was applied to his hard-fought legacy.

Contrary to the Arcedecknes, the Kelly family presented a greater Irish-Jamaican connection. Whereas Chaloner and his sister settled in England and became part of the establishment there, Denis Kelly returned to Ireland. His daughter married into Irish gentry and the two plantations were transferred to the Brownes of Westport upon Denis’s death in 1757. The Kelly’s had a connection with the other Irish on the island as was clear from the will of John Burke, who had married a Marcella Kelly, possibly a relation. Burke had a house in Spanish Town and was a judge of the admiralty.⁸⁷ Burke mentioned Denis Kelly and his wife’s brother Thomas Kelly from the Middle Temple as beneficiaries in his will, together with Dennis Daly and Nicholas Bourke, who he called his kinsman. The will also mentioned a number of the Irish on the island or those who had a connection with them, including a John

⁸⁴ ‘List of the Jamaican estates’ (N.L.I.).

⁸⁵ ‘Copies of sworn accounts by Denis Kelly of his title to lands in the parish of St Dorothy, Jamaica’ (N.L.I., Westport papers, MS 40,910/7 (3)).

⁸⁶ Will of Denis Kelly of Lisduff, Co. Galway, dated 1 Mar. 1754 (N.L.I., Westport papers, MS 40,910/8 (1)).

⁸⁷ ‘Civil list’ in *Jamaica Almanac* (1751).

Burke in Guanaboa and the provost marshal Robert Delap. This outlined the wider connections of the Kelly brothers among the Irish in Jamaica, including the Arcedeckne family, the B(o)urkes and the Delaps. This case study illustrated how the Protestant Irish Denis Kelly managed to consolidate the property portfolio started by Edmund and developed the Cocoa Walk plantation. His position as chief justice and connections with the white planter class demonstrated that Denis was part of the white elite. Unlike his brothers, he was fortunate enough to return to Ireland, where the family continued to own land. His will outlined the extent of his Jamaican connections and the wealth that he had accumulated.

III *The Burke family*

In the course of the eighteenth century, a number of Irish with less prolific connections than the Arcedecknes and Kellys had settled on the island. Some managed to obtain property in various parts of the island and they included a number of individuals who happened to share the surname Burke (or Bourke) of Irish origin. Family connections between them appeared to be less clear, Burke being a common surname in Ireland, especially in counties Galway and Mayo.⁸⁸ One notable exception in relation to their prominence was the aforementioned Nicholas Bourke, who was related to the Arcedeckne family through marriage. Much of the evidence relating to the extended Burke family is lacking, with the exception of the wills. The case study will discuss their origin and links with Ireland, while highlighting their relationship with the institution of slavery.

One aspect in relation to the Burkes that perhaps set them apart from some of the other Irish was that their wills often mentioned offspring with either enslaved or free women of Afro-Caribbean descent. The Burkes managed to obtain property on various parts of the island and appeared less wedded to the island's urban centres. In general they owned smaller

⁸⁸ The complexity of this is illustrated by a number of men called Patrick Burke. One was a planter in Clarendon, while the other was identified as a merchant living in Portland parish. For the purpose of clarity the Burkes are identified in relation to their residence at the time their will was probated, i.e. Patrick Burke (Clarendon) and Patrick Burke (St Thomas in the East). Most of them were described as planters, although in eighteenth-century Jamaica this was a term that was used for anyone involved in the plantations.

plots of land and considering the wills that they left, had connections both on the island and in Ireland. While people from Ireland belonging to the wider Burke family perhaps arrived on the island earlier, those with property began to appear in the second half of the eighteenth century.⁸⁹

The Burkes left a number of probated testaments in Jamaica. Thus we find a Patrick Burke (St James) with a probated will in June 1766 who left a sum of £100 to his brother John and sisters Jane and Mary, while a number of his nephews and nieces received £20 in ‘Irish money’ to further assist with their education. Patrick’s wife Elizabeth inherited his personal effects but did not receive a share of his property, perhaps indicating that she was a free woman of colour.⁹⁰ In 1752 he had bought 100 acres in the same parish. The list of individuals who received money and acreage indicates that, in this instance, Patrick Burke had no surviving offspring. The will demonstrates that Burke had sold some of his holding to a nephew, Thomas, but left no land to his brother John. Instead it was divided between friends unrelated to him, indicating perhaps some family feud. The 100 acres was divided up into five parcels and given to the Dunbar family and Henry Cuniffe.⁹¹ When Thomas Burke (St Ann) died in 1774 he stipulated that a piece of land in St James was to be sold and monies paid to his close relatives, including a brother Patrick in Ireland. He had fathered a child with a ‘mulatto woman named Peggy belonging to the estate of the Rt. Honourable Lord Viscount Mayo’, which he referred to as a ‘misfortune’.⁹² Both wills demonstrated the complexity of the wider Burke family connections, however, it is clear from the instructions that both

⁸⁹ For instance, we find an Alice Burk in 1676 on the ‘List of marriages on record in Jamaica before 1680’ as reproduced in Oliver, *Caribbeana*, i, p. 121.

⁹⁰ Free people of colour were restricted in their property rights since 1761, see Christer Petley, ‘‘Legitimacy’ and social boundaries: free people of colour and the social order in Jamaican slave society’ in *Social History*, xxx (2005), p. 487.

⁹¹ Probated will of Patrick Burke 12 June 1766 (IRO, L.O.S. 36, f. 97).

⁹² One of the executors was Thomas Burke (St James); Probated will of Thomas Burke 1 Dec. 1774 (IRO, L.O.S. 42, f. 42).

Patrick and Thomas Burke still maintained a relationship with Ireland and had business dealings with each other on the island.

The Viscount Mayo mentioned in Thomas's will referred to John Burke (London), who had inherited the title from his deceased brother in 1742. He had married Catherine Aylmer, the daughter of Whitfield Aylmer, member of one of the earlier English settler families in Jamaica. By marriage, the viscount obtained a number of properties in Jamaica that Catherine held through inheritance and her first marriage.⁹³ It was perhaps through this connection that members of the wider Burke family began to arrive on the island in the latter part of the eighteenth century. One of them perhaps was Patrick Burke (St John), who died in March 1782. He was described as a planter, who had inherited lands from his father Hubert. The beneficiaries all resided near Tuam, Co. Galway, indicating perhaps that the family obtained the lands in Jamaica through a previous inheritance.⁹⁴ Another, Garret Burke (St John) owned the Prospect plantation in St John.⁹⁵ He had been in a relationship with Betty Martial, 'a free negro woman' to whom he gave thirty acres at Prospect, with instructions to the executors to build her a house. They had two 'mulatto daughters, Fanny Burke and Catherine Burke', who were both given three enslaved. The rest of the estate was given to his brother Anthony Burke, who also resided on the island. When Garret died in 1775, a codicil was found adding another 'two mulatto daughters Henrietta Burke and Jenny Burke', who together were also given thirty acres at Prospect to build another house.⁹⁶ His brother Anthony was a collecting constable and clerk of the vestry in the same parish.⁹⁷ Thomas Burke (St Thomas in the East), a planter who died in 1783, had a son of the same name with

⁹³ The inheritance was contested as Catherine's mother Gertrude had remarried and her second husband claimed the estates as his. When the court ruled in her favour, Mayo administered the estates; see John Lodge, *The peerage of Ireland* (Dublin, 1789) iv, pp 248-49; Edward D. Ingraham (ed.), *Reports of cases argued and determined in the English Ecclesiastical Courts (1724-1844)* (6 vols, Philadelphia, 1841) vi, pp 168-69.

⁹⁴ Probated will Patrick Burke, dated 11 July 1782 (IRO, L.O.S. 49, f. 74).

⁹⁵ Now in the parish of St Catherine, close to the town of Bog Walk, not to be confused with Prospect Pen, owned by aforementioned Simon Taylor. No compensation was claimed for the property.

⁹⁶ Probated will Garret Burke, 14 Dec. 1775 (IRO, L.O.S. 42, f. 204).

⁹⁷ 'Middlesex magistrates (civil)' in *Jamaica Almanac*, 1790.

Margaret Prendergast.⁹⁸ In his will, he stipulated that two enslaved boys should be bought for his son and transferred to him at the age of twenty-one. The rest of his property was given to his father Myles Burke in Co. Galway, except for some silver buckles that were given to his 'kinsman' Richard Burke of the Maverly estate on the island.⁹⁹ The latter was also appointed, together with a William Burke, as the guardian of his son. One of the witnesses was listed as Hyacinth Burke, perhaps another relative.¹⁰⁰

Patrick Burke (Clarendon) was one of a number of small landowners who did not own a large tract of land to develop for sugar production. From his will, it appears that he had a connection with the Fearon family and their holdings in the parish of Clarendon.¹⁰¹ His will mentioned a son, John Burke, with 'Mary Bayly a free mulatto woman of Spanish Town', and a daughter Peggy Burke from an enslaved woman Betty.¹⁰² While requesting that his daughter be freed, it required the permission of Mary Fearon, who had obtained ownership through the mother. His will also mentioned two relatives in Ireland. By his death in 1782 Burke also left his mother £50, while in the case of no living heirs his relatives in Ireland, 'James Connerly commonly called Jimmy Dolphin, Mary Stewart late Miller', would be bequeathed everything. The executors of the will were also named as guardians of the children.¹⁰³

In the nineteenth century, Patrick Burke (St Thomas in the East) was a noted member of the militia and described as a merchant from the Manchioneal area.¹⁰⁴ He owned the Betty's Hope and Orange Hill estates. He had a relationship with Elizabeth Burke, 'a black free woman' with whom he had four children. Upon his death in 1822, she received the house

⁹⁸ She was described as a 'quadroon', meaning a quarter of African ancestry and perhaps free; the surname Prendergast indicates a possible Irish connection.

⁹⁹ In all likelihood part of Maverley, currently a suburb of North Kingston.

¹⁰⁰ Probated will Thomas Burke, 9 June 1784 (IRO, L.O.S. 50, f. 102).

¹⁰¹ It mentions Mrs Mary Fearon of Oakes's (presumably Oakes Pen in the parish of Clarendon); Probate will of Patrick Burke (IRO, L.O.S 48, f. 224).

¹⁰² A second son, George, had been born a year after the will was created in 1775.

¹⁰³ Probated will of Patrick Burke, 17 Dec. 1782 (IRO, L.O.S. 48, f. 224).

¹⁰⁴ A settlement in the parish of Portland.

and its associated belongings, including six enslaved in Titchfield (Portland).¹⁰⁵ In his will he left his two plantations to his brother and sister from Castlebar, Co. Mayo.¹⁰⁶ John Burke (St Mary) died in 1838 aged thirty and had worked at the Wentworth estate. His father in Tuam, Co. Galway and his possible relatives Catherine and John were beneficiaries.¹⁰⁷ One of the executors was an R. C. Burke of the Frontier estate in the same parish.¹⁰⁸ Throughout the nineteenth century, the number of second and third-generation Burkes that entered the records increased.

The fragmented presence of the Burkes in the rural areas of Jamaica indicated that they had obtained property on the island in the middle of the eighteenth century, either through purchase or family connections. The regular mentions of ‘kinsmen’ in the wills indicates that family members had travelled together from the west of Ireland to Jamaica to work on the plantations and had managed to purchase property. These informal links, the lack of documentation and the relative poverty of the Burkes suggests that a number of them were Catholic Irish. The Burkes did differ from the Kellys and Arcedecknes in having greater interaction with the enslaved. That one of them called fathering offspring a ‘misfortune’ indicates that they were acutely aware of the social ramifications of these relationships. However, by considering subsequent wills, it appears that this did not deter the Burkes from starting multiracial families and they maintained strong family connections, both abroad and on the island itself.

The three case studies in this chapter highlight the Protestant Irish interest in the Jamaican plantation economy during the eighteenth century. They illustrate how legal professionals such as Andrew Arcedeckne and Denis Kelly obtained land holdings and

¹⁰⁵ Will of Patrick Burke, recorded 19 June 1822 (IRO, L.O.S. 101, f. 100).

¹⁰⁶ Burkes from Ballynew, Co. Mayo; see ‘Landed Estates Court Rentals’ (O’Brien collection) lx, Bourke, 15 Nov. 1860. Neither plantation remained in the family at the time of abolition.

¹⁰⁷ Probated will of John Burke, 18 Dec. 1838 (IRO, L.O.S. 119, f. 53).

¹⁰⁸ Frontier was a large estate in St Mary where Tacky’s War had begun in 1760; see Hilary McD. Beckles and Verene A. Shepherd, *Saving souls: the struggle to end the transatlantic trade in Africans* (Kingston, 2007), pp 28-29.

developed the sugar plantations as a basis for their wealth. Both families became part of the white elite and absentees. They retained links with Ireland, especially Denis Kelly, who returned after his period in Jamaica. The extended Burke family revealed a link with Ireland that highlights how the informal relationships between the Irish remained important during the latter half of the eighteenth century. In addition, the Burke case study illustrates their connection with the enslaved on the island. The imperial context of these transatlantic connections will be considered in the next case study.

7 The Irish in Jamaica and the impact of Empire

The previous case studies have illustrated the fragmented nature of the Protestant, Catholic and Dissenter Irish presence in Jamaica during the eighteenth century. This chapter will consider the impact of increased imperial control on the colonial experiences of the Protestant, Catholic and Dissenter Irish in the context of the British Empire. The degree of imperial influence on Jamaican affairs will be considered in the context of local government and the mercantile connections. The emphasis will be on the second half of the eighteenth century, when the Spanish Town and Privilege controversies unfolded. It will highlight the increasing metropolitan involvement in these constitutional struggles in Jamaica and the attempts by London to gain a degree of control. In addition, the chapter will investigate how the structures of Empire facilitated the mercantile relationships between Ireland and Jamaica. These included the settlement of Irish merchants on the island, London-based merchant houses with links to Ireland and Jamaica, and transatlantic Irish traders that brought Irish supplies to Jamaica. The local government and mercantile aspects will illustrate how the Protestant, Catholic and Dissenter Irish in Jamaica featured within the structures of Empire.

The case studies in this chapter concern two political controversies that involved men from Ireland, while a third will highlight the mercantile links. The first will present the Delap brothers, who were Dissenters from Co. Donegal that had settled in Jamaica. Francis Delap became involved in the Spanish Town controversy, which will highlight the complexities around metropolitan control over local government. It will be followed by an account of the involvement of Nicholas Bourke, a member of the extended Arcedeckne family in the Privilege Controversy. As a Protestant Irish member of the planter class, this case study will present the arguments in support of the independence of local government. The third case study will consider the mercantile links between Ireland and Jamaica by presenting three individual examples, that of the Nesbitt trading house, trader Samuel Watt and the Greg and

Cunningham partnership. All three case studies will highlight individual experiences of the Protestant, Catholic and Dissenter Irish in the context of Empire during the second half of the eighteenth century.

I Delap

The extended Delap family included merchants and planters who over the course of the eighteenth century established a network of connections across the Atlantic. Originally from Scotland, the family had moved to Ireland in the seventeenth century, and were in all likelihood Presbyterian.¹ While members of the family continued to reside in Ramelton, Co. Donegal, others settled in France or moved to the Americas. Situated on the mouth of Lough Swilly, the town became an important trade centre for the region during the eighteenth century. It had connections with Scotland, North America and the Caribbean. The Delaps married into other Ramelton families, like the Watts, and began expanding their mercantile relationships during the eighteenth century.² In the West Indies, the Delap family concentrated their efforts on the island of Antigua, where in the early eighteenth century both John and Francis Delap settled as merchants. In 1737, this Francis Delap was named an executor in relation to the sale of a piece of land of Henry Osborn, indicating that he was a member of the white settler elite on the island.³ The family would continue to remain a feature on Antigua, where they owned the Delap's Estate in the Willoughby Bay area of the island.⁴ In France, a Samuel Delap established himself as a wine merchant in Bordeaux.⁵

¹ Judith Carroll, 'The excavation of the old Presbyterian meetinghouse at Ramelton, Co. Donegal' in *Archaeology Ireland*, iii (summer, 1989), pp 61-63; William M. Mervine, 'The Scotch settlers in Raphoe, County Donegal, Ireland' in *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, xxxvi (1912), pp 257-72; Andrew R. Holmes, 'Presbyterian religion, historiography, and Ulster Scots identity, c. 1800 to 1914 in *The Historical Journal*, lii (Sept. 2009), pp 615-40.

² For the Watt family see section iii of this chapter.

³ This Francis Delap died on Antigua in 1766; see Anthony Brown, *The laws of the island of Antigua* (2 vols, London, 1805) i, p. 353.

⁴ See pedigree and records of baptism, marriage and burials in Vere Langford Oliver, *The history of the island of Antigua* (3 vols, London 1893) i, pp 195-97; compensation for 268 enslaved amounting to £3952 18s.11d. for the Delap's estate on Antigua was paid in 1839 to John Richard Delap Tollemache; Antigua 82 (Delap's Estate), (UCL website).

⁵ Louis M. Cullen, *The Irish brandy houses of eighteenth century France* (Dublin, 2000), p. 92.

Two members of the family, the brothers Robert and Francis Delap, settled in Jamaica, while a third brother, Samuel, and three sisters remained in Ireland. The case study will assess the specific links that Francis Delap developed in Jamaica, his position as provost marshal and his role in the Spanish Town controversy. It will further examine the period of his imprisonment and the wider implications of his arrest on local government and the response of the metropolitan power.

The brothers Robert and Francis Delap arrived on the island in the early part of the eighteenth century, perhaps during the latter part of the 1730s.⁶ The Scottish connection of the Delap family played a role as they settled on the western side of Jamaica, an area associated with a large Scottish presence.⁷ In 1741, Robert married Mary Guthrie, the widow of Col. John Guthrie, who had died shortly after reaching an agreement with Maroon leader Cudjoe in 1739.⁸ This provided Robert with a degree of wealth as two years later he was able to patent 1000 acres in the parish of St James.⁹ In March 1745, his standing had increased to such a degree that he was elected to represent Westmoreland in the assembly.¹⁰ However, he appeared to take little interest in politics and was expelled in 1748 for non-attendance.¹¹ In 1750, Robert managed to lease the patent of provost marshal when his predecessor, the Scot Alexander Innes, left the island for Edinburgh.¹² Together with his deputies, Robert was responsible for executing the writs of the assembly elections and ensuring these were carried

⁶ There is no record of them in this decade, but as Robert marries in 1741, it seems likely that they arrived on the island in this period. John Guthrie is a possible connection through links with Scotland.

⁷ Douglas Hamilton, *Scotland, the Caribbean and the Atlantic world, 1750-1820* (Manchester, 2005), p. 56.

⁸ She received an annual pension of £100, see *JAJ*, iii, pp 406, 513-14; J. H. Lawrence-Archer, *Monumental inscriptions of the British West Indies from the earliest date* (London, 1875), pp 336-37.

⁹ Patents (JARD, 1B/11/1/25, f. 115).

¹⁰ *JAJ*, iv, 1-2.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 114.

¹² The patent was owned by Peter Forbes, whose father Alexander Forbes had been appointed provost marshal in 1725. Innes died in Edinburgh in 1749, Robert presumably bought the lease of the patent from him before he left the island. Forbes remained in England and during the Spanish Town controversy he asked to be heard in relation to the Act that regulated the proceeding of the provost marshal; see *CSP (America & West Indies)* xxxiv, 729 (Sept. 1725); K. H. Ledward (ed.), *Journals of the Board of Trade and Plantations* (14 vols, London, 1932) ix, p. 383; *Gentleman's Magazine* (London, 1749) xix, p. 284; *JAJ*, iv, 715.

out according to rules set out in legislation.¹³ He was also responsible for the collecting of fees and administrative functions when the courts were in session.¹⁴ Most of these tasks were carried out by the clerks in the Spanish Town office of the provost marshal. Robert died suddenly in 1751, leaving no offspring. His brief period on the island illustrated how Robert had managed to obtain property and a position in civil government under the patent of Alexander Innes.

Upon the death of his brother, Francis quickly stepped into the vacant role of provost marshal.¹⁵ He later referred to himself as the ‘executor, heir at law, and residuary devisee [sic]’ of Robert, indicating that his brother had passed away without leaving a will.¹⁶ As Francis was the closest living relative on the island, he had managed to successfully claim the estate. The two brothers had worked closely together on the administration of the post of provost marshal, according to Francis, and it perhaps suited the local government officials to have a degree of continuity at a time when Governor Trelawny was preparing to leave Jamaica.¹⁷ After obtaining his brother’s estate, Francis also patented land (100 acres in 1753 and 300 acres in 1754, both in St James) close to the properties that he had inherited from Robert.¹⁸ Two decades later he patented another 300 acres in St Mary.¹⁹ With the lease of the provost marshal patent, Francis Delap, who remained unmarried, divided his time between his two plantations, Mount Eagle and Orange Hill, and his official duties in Spanish Town.²⁰ Like Denis Kelly, Francis Delap sought to consolidate the property holding of the family while retaining the patent to public office. However, it was the position of provost marshall that would bring him to the attention of the authorities in London.

¹³ Alexander Aikman (ed.), *Laws of Jamaica 1681-1759* (2 vols, Kingston, 1802) ii, pp 223-30.

¹⁴ For a list of these (mostly related to quit rents) that Robert and his deputies had to collect; see *JAJ*, iv, 303-07.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 334.

¹⁶ The use of ‘heir at law’ indicates that Robert died intestate, *ibid.*, 606.

¹⁷ George Metcalf, *Royal government and political conflict in Jamaica 1729-1783* (London, 1965), pp 100-08.

¹⁸ Patents (JARD, 1B/11/1/26, f. 42, f. 97).

¹⁹ Patents (JARD, 1B/11/1/32, f. 116).

²⁰ ‘Will of Francis Delap, 1775’ (National Archives (Kew), PCC Prob 11/1014/193).

As a plantation owner, Delap could count on a number of powerful friends among the planter elite and quietly sympathised with them.²¹ In the process of leaving, Governor Trelawny had organised that the government in London would appoint the commander of the Jamaica naval station, Charles Knowles, as his replacement. This introduced a period of political turmoil that initially was not of direct concern to Delap, who prepared to retire to his estate. In August 1754, he asked Governor Knowles and the chief justice permission to be absent for 'six weeks or two months', which was initially agreed to.²² His plans were thwarted when Knowles decided to dissolve the assembly and call new elections during the sitting of the grand court in the same month.²³ This added to the already significant workload of the clerks and Delap's deputies. When Francis pointed this out to the governor, he was confronted with an angry response.²⁴ In his work, Delap was supported by a number of deputies and his principal clerk, George Carr. In Kingston, his deputy was Gaywood Goad, who supported the governor in his move of the capital to the city.²⁵ One of Delap's friends was the 'councillor at law' Samuel Jeake, the grandson of a Dissenter of the same name, who together with Carr had power of attorney over Delap's affairs. The last connection indicated a further link with the Scottish presence.

As provost marshal, the Francis had to appear impartial and outside of the political arena, especially when dealing with the election writs. Governor Knowles continued with the preparation of the next session of the assembly in October 1754, by ordering elections and cancelling Delap's permission to leave Spanish Town.²⁶ The provost marshal set to work to prepare the necessary paperwork for each parish, but was given instructions by Knowles to

²¹ The main issue centred on the political tussle between the planters and merchants in the assembly over the move of the capital from Spanish Town to Kingston. Knowles supported the merchants, while he was resisted by the planters; see Metcalf, *Royal government*, pp 109-38.

²² The main source for this section is the personal testimony given in front of an assembly committee by Delap two years after the event. It was entered into the Journals as 'Examination of Francis Delap, late provost marshal' in *JAJ*, iv, 689-715.

²³ *Ibid.*, 689

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 690.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

keep the exact date of the elections a secret. Delap perceived this as an attempt to give the merchants of Kingston and their sympathisers the opportunity to get their support out for their candidates.²⁷ Knowles insisted that this was one of the customs of elections in England, to which Delap responded that 'he [Delap] knew little of the laws or customs of England' and indicated that in Jamaica it was customary to give notice as early as possible.²⁸ Delap, however, was in no position to refuse the governor any of the papers in relation to the election, ensuring the dates were left blank. He left the papers with Knowles, who still had to dissolve the old assembly, which he duly did on the 26 August.²⁹ At this point the governor and council had already moved to Kingston, while the office of the provost marshal remained in Spanish Town.

The governor and the merchants, in their attempt to gain a majority in the assembly, identified the parishes of Port Royal, Kingston, St Andrew and St George as their main electoral targets. Perceived as sympathetic to his fellow planters, Delap could inform his friends of these plans. The governor threatened to dismiss Delap and replace him with the Kingston deputy, Goad.³⁰ Delap insisted on the impartiality of his office and that he had executed his duties of provost marshal diligently thus far. Eventually, Delap received the writs of election from the governor but only handed one, for St George, to Goad, while keeping the others.³¹ On 30 September 1754, Delap received a notice asking him to attend the governor in Kingston, but refused in a letter he wrote together with Jeake. In response, the governor ordered the arrest of the provost marshal to be executed by Charles Kelsall, the

²⁷ Ibid, 691.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid., 694.

³¹ For this examination, Delap had been given copies of papers sent by Knowles to London through the influential lawyer Ferdinand John Paris. He did not indicate why he provided Goad with the St George writ and kept the others, *ibid.*

coroner.³² Delap appeared in front of the governor, who immediately asked him where the writs for Port Royal, Kingston and St Andrew were and ordered them to be handed over. On his return to Spanish Town, Delap met with fellow planters Charles Price Sr, Rose Fuller, John Morse and Thomas Gordon,³³ who assisted with writing a petition to the governor, in which Francis refused to hand over the writs.³⁴ To avoid confiscation, two chests from the office of the provost marshal were transported to the house of Charles Price, containing the 29 volumes of papers that Francis had kept as his personal records since his brother's death. The following day, 2 October 1754, Delap delivered the petition to Kingston and was quickly suspended by the governor, who appointed Samuel Johnston instead. For his refusal to hand over the writs he imprisoned the former provost marshal and threatened to send him to England.

After being taken into custody, Delap was placed under house arrest at the residence of his deputy, Goad. There he continued to correspond with Price and the others while meeting with his attorneys, Jeake and Gordon. Delap was also assisted by fellow planters Stephen Richard Redwood and Charles White, and the five quickly established that the governor had no right to suspend someone appointed under patent in England unless that individual had been convicted in the courts.³⁵ After these discussions, Goad blocked access to Delap and took Jeake into custody in an attempt to curtail his communication with Price and the others. One of the first to visit Delap in custody was Robert Arcedeckne, who had been present during the formal suspension and had been asked by the governor to reason with Delap. Arcedeckne pressed upon him that he should comply with the governor's wishes,

³² Coroners in eighteenth-century colonial America were appointed by the governor to act as general officials with a variety of duties; see Jeffrey M. Jentzen, *Death investigation in America: coroners, medical examiners, and the pursuit of medical certainty* (Harvard, 2010), pp 11-12.

³³ Gordon was a notable exception, as he was one of the few Scottish-born lawyers that managed to set up a practice on the island and was appointed attorney general in 1766; see Alan L. Karras, *Sojourners in the sun: Scottish migrants in Jamaica and the Chesapeake, 1740-1800* (London, 1992), p. 61.

³⁴ *JAJ*, iv, 695-96.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 700.

warning him, 'as a friend and a lawyer' that he would be ruined if he refused. Delap made it clear that if Arcedeckne had seen the legal papers in relation to his dismissal now in possession of the governor, he would be giving different advice. Delap indicated he would not comply with the wishes of the governor, which he deemed to be illegal. Arcedeckne retreated and indicated that he intended to remain neutral in the conflict.³⁶ The case illustrated how the colonial experience of Francis Delap had changed due to the events in local politics outside of his control. In contrast with, for instance, the Protestant Irish lawyers Brodrick and Totterdell, he did not set out to use his official position for political gain. And while his Scottish links in Jamaica had provided a degree of support, the lack of assistance from the local political establishment, which included Robert Arcedeckne, sealed Delap's fate.

The governor had ordered Delap's house to be searched, in an attempt to obtain the three election writs. In an attempt to return to Spanish Town, Delap asked if he could be transported to a common jail rather than stay in a private residence. On 5 October he was brought before the council at his own request, where he found Knowles joined by five members of the council, the attorney general Henry Bynloss and Robert Arcedeckne. From the hearing, it became clear that Arcedeckne supported the governor in an informal manner and had no official role. As Delap refused to comply with the request to hand over his papers the governor ordered the former provost marshal to 'be put into irons and kept in close confinement, in the fort at Port Royal'.³⁷ After being carried off to prison, Arcedeckne again visited Delap the next day to assure him that he did not support the action of the governor and neither did the attorney general. Both perhaps perceived the actions of the Knowles as going too far and attempted to limit their association. Delap suggested to Arcedeckne that he [Delap] should mention the names of his supporters to him. But fearful, he retreated as 'it

³⁶ Ibid., 701.

³⁷ Ibid., 703-04.

might occasion his being put in irons' and Arcedeckne confessed that he would divulge the names that Delap would give him rather than suffering that fate.³⁸

On 6 October 1754, Goad and the others discovered that the two chests were at the house of Charles Price and took the keys off Delap, and the next day the new provost marshal obtained all the papers from the house of Price.³⁹ While the governor tried to have him sent to England for trial, Delap insisted that 'if he was accused of any fault or crime, he could not be tried there, but in Jamaica only; that the municipal laws of Jamaica not being in force in England'.⁴⁰ When Delap appeared in front of the governor and council again on 17 October, Arcedeckne and the attorney general were absent. Having secured the papers, Knowles was still keen to find out who Delap had conspired with, but the former provost marshal refused to divulge any names under cross-examination. On the 24 October he appeared in front of a committee of the newly elected assembly in Spanish Town to discuss the writ of St David. He was also told by Dr Samuel Worth, who 'used to take care of [his] family and slaves' that a number of enslaved at his property had died and that the doctor had been refused entry to Delap's house in Spanish Town to see to them. He was also informed that the enslaved on his estate in Westmoreland had moved off the property and that as he held power of attorney on a number of estates on the island, 'to the amount of £3000' these were not attended to. In an effort to avoid further losses he gave the planters Charles Price Jnr, John Ellis, Alexander Crawford and Henry Dawkins the power of attorney, shared with the aforementioned Jeake.⁴¹ In November, Price, Ellis and Jeake managed to secure a bail hearing for Delap, who was put before chief justice Philip Pinnock. The latter was assisted by Robert Arcedeckne, who

³⁸ Ibid., 704.

³⁹ Ibid., 705.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 706-07.

⁴¹ Ibid., 709-10.

managed to force the decision to bail Delap over a point of law. Francis was released on the 13 November after 43 days and returned to his Spanish Town home to await his trial.⁴²

The case going before the courts brought further legal complications. The governor had ordered the incarceration of Delap without a formal charge. In March 1755, the case was eventually filed and focused on the three missing election writs for Port Royal, Kingston and St Andrew. In June, the case was eventually heard in the grand court in front of the chief justice Pinnock, Thomas Hibbert, Francis Cooke and Alexander Crawford.⁴³ With Jeake and Gordon as his council, Delap challenged the sitting judges' authority on the account that most of them were assembly men and that Cooke was a naturalised citizen and thus not allowed to sit as a judge. Despite these protestations, the case continued, resulting in a guilty verdict and further imprisonment of a year and a day with a fine of £500.⁴⁴ Delap was returned to prison, this time in Spanish Town, and served his sentence.

The suspension and conviction of a former provost marshal was unusual and invariably attracted considerable attention. Delap had gathered a number of powerful friends around him and despite the harsh conditions that he had suffered, managed to survive. The entire affair soon unravelled and gained attention in the metropole. In England, the absent Jamaican plantation owners used Delap's predicament to highlight the governor's malpractice to the London government. A pamphlet bearing Delap's name was published, which highlighted Knowles' abuse of power to the Board of Trade.⁴⁵ It described the events surrounding the elections, the arrest of Delap and the subsequent court case, portraying the provost marshal as an innocent man, framed by the authoritarian governor and the merchants. Whereas his predecessor had been able to stand above factions, Knowles had displayed some very antagonistic and almost autocratic behaviour towards the planters. Two years later, he

⁴² Ibid., 711.

⁴³ Ibid., 714.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 715

⁴⁵ *An account of the trial of Francis Delap* (London, 1755).

tried in vain to clear his name.⁴⁶ The Delap affair presented a fundamental erosion of the independence of the office of provost marshal, which resulted in growing opposition.⁴⁷ Eventually Spanish Town regained its status as the capital of the island, but the unfortunate former provost marshal never returned to his post and retired. Francis Delap died in 1775.

The testimony and other documents in relation to the Spanish Town controversy indicated the variety of the relationships that Delap maintained. They included Scottish, English and Irish members of the white establishment, lawyers and clerks and an indentured servant.⁴⁸ The Scottish and Presbyterian links were highlighted by the presence of Jeake, who supported Francis throughout. The majority of Delap's relationships appeared to have been with fellow planters, including a number of them close to his property in Westmoreland. His connection with Robert Arcedeckne, the cousin of Andrew, is perhaps a curious one. The conversations between the two men illustrated the different positions of the Irish on the island. The Protestant Irish lawyer Robert Arcedeckne had decided to temporarily support the governor, perhaps to maintain his legal career. Delap stood more on the sidelines of the political arena, while attempting to fulfil the obligations of his post. In that sense, he had more in common with some of the Scottish settlers on the island, and less with the other Irish. The fact that Arcedeckne visited the former provost marshal twice to give him what he termed 'friendly' advice indicated that the two had some personal connection, especially considering that Delap appeared to want to divulge the names of those who assisted him. That Arcedeckne argued during the court case that 'it was a matter of indulgence' should Delap be given bail confirms that there was a degree of mutual respect between the two men.⁴⁹ In terms of his own social status, Delap's behaviour indicated that he perceived himself to be of

⁴⁶ *An historical account of sessions of assembly, for the island of Jamaica ... containing a vindication of his excellency Charles Knowles* (London, 1757).

⁴⁷ Jack. P. Greene, 'Of liberty and the colonies; a case study of constitutional conflict in the mid-eighteenth-century British American Empire' in David Womersley (ed.), *Liberty and American experience in the eighteenth century* (Indianapolis, 2006), pp 67-71.

⁴⁸ John Innes, who had been part of the Delap household, see *JAJ*, iv, 715.

⁴⁹ *JAJ*, iv, 711.

a lower standing to Robert Arcedeckne. Francis was a leaseholder of a patent to an official position, while Arcedeckne's close association with the governor and chief justice pointed to a higher social standing.

Francis Delap had settled permanently in Jamaica and continued to live on the island for another two decades, while he tried to clear his name.⁵⁰ Francis Delap never married and the 'family' he mentioned in his testimony referred to 'a free woman of colour', Mary Shippen, who bore him four children.⁵¹ Presumably he lived with them in Spanish Town until her death, while he travelled to the Western part of the island to oversee his properties. That he described this domestic arrangement in his will as a family further indicates how he perceived his own social standing. Francis had also fathered 'a mulatto boy named Arthur Delap', who was six years old when his will was created. He was the son of 'Fanny the house wench' at Mounteagle estate.⁵² In his will he stipulated that his young son was to have an education, learn a trade and be given 'three new negro boys nearly of his age to be bought for him by my executors, marked AD'. His four children with Mary – Sarah, Robert, Elizabeth and Francis Jr – were put under guardianship of the executors. His family life depicted a different relationship with the Afro-Caribbean population than the Protestant Irish lawyers and had a parallel with the extended Burke family.

As indicated above, the Delap brothers owned two plantations, Mount Eagle and Orange Hill in the parish of Westmoreland.⁵³ Both were sugar works situated east of present-day Negril. It appears that Mount Eagle contained the largest acreage.⁵⁴ Francis Delap had also patented land in the parish of Trelawny, the 1700 acres that was put in the hands of John

⁵⁰ The case was referred to the Board of Trade and the House of Commons; see *Journals of the House of Commons*, xxvii, p. 870 (Apr. 1757).

⁵¹ 'Will of Francis Delap'.

⁵² 'Ibid.

⁵³ While the names might have some Irish connection, there is no Mount Eagle or Orange Hill in Co. Donegal.

⁵⁴ Orange Hill is now on the outskirts of Negril, while Mount Eagle was situated close to the Moreland Hill area in the parish of Westmoreland.

Graves and Jane Stome.⁵⁵ The surviving brother in Ireland, Samuel, had a son, also called Robert, who he sent to the Middle Temple in 1771 and who also ventured out to Jamaica.⁵⁶ He drowned upon his return to Ireland in 1782.⁵⁷ The large acreage that Francis Delap had purchased in St Mary in 1771 received no further mention in his will.

While Francis's children and some distant relations remained in Jamaica, his brother Samuel and three sisters Elizabeth, Rebecca and Margaret all remained in Ireland. In order to avoid litigation, Francis left his three sisters back in Ireland £500 each under the condition that they would refrain from any claims against his and Robert's estate. In a further attempt to appease them, he granted the 700 acres in St Thomas in the East to John Stevenson, the son of his eldest sister, Elizabeth.⁵⁸ Francis stipulated that his nephew was to be given £500 so he could start developing a sugar plantation on the land. His brother Samuel inherited the two main plantations, Mount Eagle and Orange Hill.⁵⁹ While his relations on Antigua were not mentioned, Francis left his cousin, Samuel Delap (a wine merchant in Bordeaux), a mourning ring.⁶⁰ The family had to secure the inheritance and a Samuel Delap had settled on Mount Eagle by 1779.⁶¹ In 1835 John Bogle Delap was the absentee owner of the estates and claimed compensation. By that point Mount Eagle had 255 enslaved and was awarded £4940 10s.3d., while Orange Hill was listed as having 95 enslaved and a total value of £1914 2s. 8d. that was split between the London merchant Richard Lee and John's two brothers, Samuel

⁵⁵ This referred to Colches Pen; see 'Will of Frances Delap'.

⁵⁶ H.A.C. Sturgess (ed.), *Register of admissions to the Honourable Society of the Middle Temple* (3 vols, London, 1949) iii, p. 39.

⁵⁷ Bernard Burke, *A genealogical and heraldic history of the landed gentry of Great Britain and Ireland* (2 vols, London, 1871) i, p. 340.

⁵⁸ His nephew was instructed to use the surname Delap or Dunlop. It is unclear if this property was ever developed, neither the Delaps nor Stevensons featured in relation to compensation in the parish by 1835; 'Will of Francis Delap'.

⁵⁹ 'Indenture between E. Delap and A. Nesbitt, 1772' (National Library of Jamaica, Kingston, MS 1328).

⁶⁰ He also mentioned the Barton family, originally from Co. Tipperary, who had also moved to Bordeaux in the early eighteenth century as wine merchants. He described his uncle William Barton as 'my good old master', which perhaps indicates that Francis at one stage worked for them.

⁶¹ Thomas Thistlewood visited a Samuel Delap on the Mount Eagle estate in that year; this was not the brother of Francis who had remained in Ireland, where he was treasurer of Co. Donegal; see Douglas Hall, *In miserable slavery: Thomas Thistlewood in Jamaica, 1750-86* (Kingston, 1998), p. 263 and Burke, *Landed gentry*, i, p. 340.

Francis Delap and William Drummond Delap.⁶² It demonstrated how the family had managed to safeguard the legacy of Robert Delap and Francis Delap. The case study also highlighted the different colonial experience of the Delap brothers in Jamaica. From an Irish Dissenter background, they developed links with the Scottish in Jamaica, while his interactions with the governor and Robert Arcedeckne indicated the different social position of Francis Delap. The publication of his case in London highlighted the degree of metropolitan involvement. His case became a means to an end where the absent planters in England highlighted the abuse of power by Governor Knowles. The intervention of the Board of Trade in recalling Knowles indicated the growing impact of metropolitan intervention. This would continue with the Privilege Controversy that followed.

II *Nicholas Bourke*

The fourth individual from the extended Arcedeckne family to feature in Jamaican politics was Nicholas Bourke.⁶³ During the 1760s he became part of the so-called Privilege Controversy that was a feature under the governorship of Lyttleton. It was part of a wider conflict between the colonial British America and the metropolitan government over the degree of control. Bourke was a well-read lawyer and planter who had been on the island since the 1740s.⁶⁴ In 1748 he married Elizabeth Fearon, the daughter of Thomas Fearon, with whom he had five children. He was a member of the assembly, mostly for the parish of Clarendon, from the 1750s. The connection with Thomas Fearon, former chief justice and one of the largest plantation owners in Clarendon, must have served Nicholas well. In contrast to his cousin Chaloner, Nicholas decided to remain on the island and featured

⁶² Son of Robert Cooper Lee, one of the executors of Francis's will and owner of Rose Hall, Lee had married Pricilla Kelly, presumed to be the illegitimate daughter of Denis Kelly; see 'Frances Lee (1758-1839) biography' (UCL Website) (<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/person/view/24509>) (11 Jan. 2016); Anne M. Powers, *A parcel of ribbons: letters of the 18th century Lee family in London and Jamaica* (London, 2012), pp 107, 151.

⁶³ Besides Andrew, Chaloner and Robert; Nicholas was the son of Edmund Bourke and Andrew's sister, Mary Arcedeckne; see *Gentleman's Magazine* (1835), p. 147.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

regularly in the letters of Simon Taylor.⁶⁵ Upon the death of his cousin Robert Arcedeckne in 1768, the Fontabelle estate came into the hands of the Bourke family, as the nearest relatives.

Unlike his uncle Andrew Arcedeckne, there is no record of Nicholas entering any of the four Inns of Court in London or King's Inns in Dublin before he arrived in Jamaica. It appears that he acquired most of his property through purchase and inheritance rather than patents. At the height of the Privilege Controversy in 1766, Bourke presented the views of the planter elite in a large pamphlet that was published in both Kingston and London.⁶⁶ Published anonymously, the pamphlet, entitled *Jamaica vindicated*, was quickly attributed to him.⁶⁷ After the departure of Charles Knowles in 1756, Jamaican politics returned to normal, with a local planter, Henry Moore, installed as interim governor. The West Indian planters had successfully asserted themselves in Westminster as the metropolitan interest in Jamaican affairs grew.⁶⁸ The Board of Trade was keen to find a new candidate who was both experienced in local government and had the ability to carry out instructions. They overlooked Moore, who they probably felt was too close to the planters. Instead they acted on the recommendation of Lord Halifax and appointed William Henry Lyttelton, a former M.P. who had served as governor of South Carolina in 1756.⁶⁹ In the four years that he was in power there, he had built up a reputation as a political fixer and someone who could be relied upon to carry out instructions from Whitehall. By the end of the decade, the ambitious Lyttelton was ready to move on to a more prestigious role with the help of his brother

⁶⁵ 'The letters of Simon Taylor of Jamaica to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 1765-1775' ed. B. Wood in *Camden Miscellany*, xxxv (2002), pp 1-164.

⁶⁶ [Nicholas Bourke], *The privilege of the island of Jamaica vindicated* (London, 1766).

⁶⁷ Andrew J. O'Shaughnessy, *An Empire divided: the American Revolution and the British Caribbean* (Philadelphia, 2000), p. 130.

⁶⁸ Trevor Burnard, 'Harvest years? Reconfigurations of Empire in Jamaica, 1756-1807' in *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, xl (2012), pp 533-34 and idem, 'Ireland Jamaica and the Fate of White Protestants in the British Empire in the 1780s' in Angela McCarthy (ed.), *Ireland in the world: comparative, transnational, and personal perspectives* (London, 2015), pp 15-33.

⁶⁹ His family had a connection to Jamaica, as his great-uncle Sir Charles Lyttelton, who briefly served as lieutenant governor in the 1660s, had been one of the early settlers. The family had Irish connections: William was married to Martha Macartney, who was related to the earl of Longford and had herself inherited land in Co. Cavan. Lyttelton would later be elevated into the Irish peerage as Baron Westcote and one of his sons, George Fulke, sat in the Irish House of Commons in 1776; see Edward J. Cashin, *Governor Henry Ellis and the transformation of British North America* (Athens, GA, 2007), pp 52-54.

George.⁷⁰ The Board of Trade found in Lyttelton someone with an established track record, who could take on the formidable planter faction. It was to be a crucial decision in the tumultuous period of the Seven Years War, leading up to what Jack Greene has called ‘the most profound constitutional crisis in Jamaica’.⁷¹ This case study will highlight the role played by Bourke in the Privilege Controversy by considering the pamphlet that he wrote in support of the Jamaican planters and the independence of local government, which was published in London.

The Protestant Irish Nicholas Bourke was an important figure in local politics and one of the main protagonists of the planter faction. Together with Edward Long, the Speaker Charles Price and his father-in-law Thomas Fearon, he formed a formidable opposition to Lyttelton, both locally and, through their connections, in Westminster. Bourke’s role was to find the legal basis for the arguments that were presented by the planter faction and to put them into words. He had at his disposal one of the largest libraries on the island and his sharp pen would put the planters’ arguments into focus. Since its inception, the assembly was able to arrest, detain and fine its own members or citizens who had defamed or abused the house. They were also protected from being arrested while the session was ongoing and could not be prosecuted for remarks made under privilege. It was a system that had been adopted by the majority of English colonies in the Americas, based on the principles that applied in the House of Commons at Westminster, historical precedent used by the settlers to emphasise their heritage in the English parliamentary tradition. A quarrel over these rights was at the heart of the Privilege Controversy and resulted in a fundamental crisis over the powers of the local assembly in the period 1764 to 1766.

⁷⁰ Eugene Sirmans Jr, *Colonial South Carolina: a political history 1663-1763* (Chapel Hill, 1966), pp 308-24; Christine Gerrard, ‘Lyttelton, George, first Baron Lyttelton (1709-1773)’ in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/17306>) (11 Aug. 2014).

⁷¹ Jack P. Greene, ‘The Jamaica privilege controversy, 1764-1766: an episode in the process of constitutional definition in the early modern British Empire’ in *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, xxii (1994), p. 16.

Lyttelton had managed the first three years of his governorship without incident as the Seven Years War drew to a close. His first test came when the Tacky Rebellion broke out in 1760, which he managed to deal with adequately in the eyes of the planter elite.⁷² Although the merchants had regrouped, the governor had kept the conflict contained, arguing for a united front during the war. Resentment among the Kingston representatives over the relocation of the capital to Spanish Town remained high. Lyttelton's hands were tied, as the planters had a majority in the assembly and could rely on great influence in Westminster. When it came to a conflict in 1764, the resentment of the previous dispute continued to play a role. The merchants felt that the planters were using the sitting of the assembly to avoid paying the spiralling debts they had incurred. But for Bourke and his fellow planters, the conflict centred on the fundamental issue of whether the governor was infringing on their rights and privileges.⁷³ Disputes quickly escalated into a standoff that paralysed the government for two years as the assembly refused to discuss any other issue. When a petition signed by fifteen prominent assembly members was published, the level of resistance was fully apparent to the governor. The Board of Trade and the Privy Council tried to intervene, but the West India lobby, headed by Charles Price Sr, took the issue to Westminster.⁷⁴ This highlighted how the Privilege Controversy had escalated and the degree of interest of the metropole.

As the conflict escalated, Bourke's role in the faction became one of putting into words the rationale behind the protest, while others engaged in the political manoeuvrings. The listing of his inventory compiled after his death in 1771 showed a large number of books and pamphlets on law and politics.⁷⁵ A planter as well as a man of letters, Bourke had detailed knowledge of constitutional matters, including the restrictions of the Irish system.

⁷² *JAJ*, v, 160-86.

⁷³ *JAJ*, iv, 510-50.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 26, 36-37.

⁷⁵ Inventories (JARD, 1B/11/3/33, f. 103).

With his large library and legal background, he quickly became the likely candidate to write the response to the arguments as Lyttelton had been presenting them. His pamphlet, published in 1766 both in Kingston and in London, carried the title *The privileges of the island of Jamaica vindicated*, demonstrating the confidence of the planter faction. As an assistant judge and a well-connected member of the assembly, the Privilege Controversy brought Bourke into the limelight, despite privately insisting that he would ‘never intermeddle in any public affairs’.⁷⁶

The sixty-seven-page pamphlet did not mention Bourke’s name but was quickly attributed to him.⁷⁷ It was presented in the form of letters, augmented with a preface and an appendix, both providing a historical context of the circumstances that had brought about the conflict. The preface outlined the origins of the conflict and the legal complexities of the issue. It emphasised the planters’ opinion that Lyttelton had breached the privileges and rights in a fundamental way. Bourke argued ‘that the assembly of this island holds the same rank, in the system of its own constitution, as a British House of Commons does, in that of our mother country’.⁷⁸ As evidence, Bourke cited a number of metropolitan examples (notably that of George Ferrers) to highlight the historical precedent of the privileges issue.⁷⁹ One of the points Bourke made focused on the role of the courts, which, he argued, had no jurisdiction over the assembly. He outlined the arrest and incarceration of Alexander Murray by the Houses of Parliament in 1751.⁸⁰ For Bourke it was a clear-cut case: ‘if we look for precedents from the mother country, to support our Chancellor’s [Governor] conduct, in the

⁷⁶ ‘Letters of Simon Taylor’, pp 23-24.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 31.

⁷⁸ *Jamaica vindicated*, p. 3.

⁷⁹ A courtier and Member of Parliament in the period of Henry VIII arrested on account of an outstanding debt. After his release was secured, legislation was put in place to guarantee members immunity from prosecution in a civil court during a session of parliament. See H. R. Woudhuysen, ‘Ferrers, George (c.1510-1579)’, in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/9360>) (3 Dec. 2012).

⁸⁰ Murray tried to get himself released under a *habeas corpus* twice but failed. See Hugh Douglas, ‘Murray, Alexander, of Elibank, Jacobite earl of Westminster (1712-1778)’, in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/19586>) (10 Sept. 2013).

case in question here ... all the precedents from thence are against him'.⁸¹ At the core of the Jamaican conflict was the execution of a writ against assembly member John Olyphant during a sitting in December 1764. Two officials confiscated his coach and horses in lieu of a debt, thanks to a favourable ruling in the courts. This was deemed a breach of privilege, as Olyphant was an elected member of the assembly. After he made a complaint, the two officials were arrested under a Speaker's warrant. They immediately applied to be released under a writ of *habeas corpus* as they had not been charged. The governor prorogued the assembly for one day, which automatically released the two officials. These events triggered the constitutional crisis that held local government to ransom for much of 1765.

A power struggle ensued over the commitment and the subsequent intervention of the governor raised the issue of privilege. While the conflict in itself seemed trivial, it was (as before) the culmination of a number of clashes between the executive and the assembly.⁸² Unlike Knowles, Lyttelton tried to make amends and gave the members opportunities to step back from the brink. But the planter faction sought a confrontation, well aware they had won the Spanish Town argument with the executive some years before. The release of the two officials was central to the second part of Bourke's pamphlet, in which he questioned the legal right of the governor to act on the writ in the way he did. In his research, he had found only one English precedent from 1704, but maintained that it was 'an opinion established in law, by a solemn determination of the Lord Keeper and all the judges of England'.⁸³ The latter aspect being debatable, he moved on to the nature of the privileges, and the well-rehearsed line that, as 'British subjects [they were] entitled to the laws of England, and to its Constitution, as their inheritance; possessing their Rights and Privileges'.⁸⁴ This had been the

⁸¹ *Jamaica vindicated*, p. 25.

⁸² For a detailed description of the affair, see Metcalf, *Royal government*, pp 157-66.

⁸³ *Jamaica vindicated*, p. 27.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 28.

argument presented during the previous conflict, and one that had not moved Knowles and the Board of Trade into action.

Bourke needed a strong argument as officials in Whitehall were always going to support the governor, unless the West Indian lobby in parliament put pressure on them not to do so. It suited Bourke's background as a lawyer, as he argued that the colonists' liberties were being 'cannibalised'. To deny the white settlers the same privileges as Englishmen was 'downright impudent nonsense' and 'mocking us with the sound of Liberty and Property, and robbing us of the substance'.⁸⁵ Bourke insisted that, as the laws and constitution of Britain applied to the colony, colonists should be treated equally. And if this was not the case, 'then are the subjects of the Colonies not freemen but slaves; not the free subjects but the outcasts of Britain'.⁸⁶ To Bourke the law was the crucial distinction 'between freedom and slavery', where it referred to the distinction between the free and participating citizens of society as opposed to being subordinate to the authorities. In this case, he pointed at the misuse of power by the governor and the legitimate opposition from the planters to it. Bourke described it as 'a slave holds everything at the pleasure of his master, and has no law, but the will of his tyrant'.⁸⁷

Bourke did admit that the assembly was not equal to the House of Commons and that 'its power ... is subordinate to that of a British legislature'. He insisted that no form of government could be imposed on the colonists, as that would be 'reducing us to a condition of slavery'.⁸⁸ Bourke argued that the Westminster model included some sort of control over the courts and with it returned to the legal arguments that formed the basis for his essay. He began to set out 'a review of the constitution of this colony, of its beginning and progress to

⁸⁵ Ibid., 44.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 45.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 46-47.

this time'.⁸⁹ Bourke's detailed knowledge of the system of government enabled him to make a compelling argument for the recognition of the Westminster model as implemented in Jamaica. In describing the institutions and their roles, Bourke argued that it should have 'the same powers, the same superiority over the courts of justice and the same rank in the system of our little community'.⁹⁰ Throughout the pamphlet he emphasised these similarities.

Going back to the case that triggered the conflict, Bourke insisted that he was not challenging the writ to confiscate Olyphant's horses and carriage as the courts had issued it. He merely defended the independence of the institution and its rights and privileges to detain those who brought the house into disrepute. Bourke's main issue was with the interference of the governor, alleging that he had acted beyond his power. He was careful not to criticise Lyttelton as a person and praised 'all the good qualities he possesses'.⁹¹ Instead, he argued that if the tools at the disposal of the governor should ever come into the hands of a 'poor, needy, and rapacious' individual, this would inevitably bring about corruption and widespread abuse of power. There was no suggestion from Bourke that Lyttelton could be accused of acting maliciously or in a corrupt manner. In his opinion, the governor had made a fatal mistake in bringing about the release of the two officials and had manipulated the situation. He argued that it was a misuse of the power of commitment (for contempt of court), although he conceded that this was a regular feature of Jamaican justice in this period. It is clear that Bourke managed to present an intricate legal argument. His intention was to both reflect popular public opinion among the European settler class and to influence those officials in London who decided on the fate of the island.

Towards the end, Bourke served up Ireland as a warning for those who supported Lyttelton. In the conclusion he noted 'the fate and condition of Ireland should be a document and warning to all the colonies. Ireland, inhabited and possessed by the children of England

⁸⁹ Ibid., 30.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 34.

⁹¹ Ibid., 52.

and of those who conquered it, was once free. It is not so now.’⁹² He continued by dismissing the system implemented by Poynings and warned that ‘the Irish enjoy at this day, less liberty than any other subjects in the British dominions’.⁹³ He reminded his readers how in 1670, the earl of Carlisle had been given instructions to implement similar laws in Jamaica and that ‘our ancestors rejected them with indignation’.⁹⁴ The pamphlet underpinned the period of civil disobedience that the assembly subsequently entered into, refusing to negotiate with the governor. The conflict was finally resolved when Lyttelton was replaced by Roger Hope Elletson, a member of a well-connected planter family.

For Bourke himself, the aftermath of the publication appears to have elevated his standing among his peers. He continued to sit in the assembly and became Speaker of the house in 1771. When he died a year later his property was divided between his two sons, Thomas and Edmund. Thomas received both the Fontabelle and Spicy Grove properties in the parish of St Mary and was listed as their owner in 1811 and holding a total of 242 enslaved on both properties. He remained in Jamaica and represented the parish of his holdings regularly in the assembly towards the end of the eighteenth century.⁹⁵ However, by 1815 Spicy Grove had been sold to William Kennedy and Fontabelle was put into receivership in 1820. Edmund inherited Oakes Pen in the parish of Clarendon and the Spring Vale plantation in St John and moved to England in the early nineteenth century. By the time of abolition his descendants received £3564 14s. 5d. for the 168 enslaved on Spring Vale and £531 11s.6d. for the 30 enslaved on Oakes Pen.⁹⁶ Like the Arcedecknes, the Bourkes became part of the West Indian establishment and relinquished most links they had with Ireland. Nicholas Bourke’s role in the Privilege Controversy illustrated how the successful Protestant Irish had

⁹² *Jamaica vindicated*, p. 64.

⁹³ This description of the constitutional arrangement revealed that Bourke was perhaps unaware of the intricacies around the practical implementation of Poynings’ Law in Ireland during the eighteenth century.

⁹⁴ *Jamaica vindicated*, p. 65; [Nicholas Bourke], *An historical account of the establishment of the colony of Jamaica* (London, 1766), p. vii.

⁹⁵ ‘Givings-in for the parish of St Mary’ in *Jamaica Almanac* (1811).

⁹⁶ Jamaica St John 51 (Spring Vale) and ‘Jamaica Clarendon 159 (Oakes) (UCL website).

become part of the white planter elite in Jamaica. The presentation of Bourke's pamphlet indicated that it was written with the metropolitan audience in mind and underlined the independence of local government as the interference from London in Jamaican affairs increased. It highlighted the impact of the structures of Empire, where local planters viewed the interference of the metropole as a threat to their local independent lawmaking organisations. However, as Bourke's pamphlet indicated, they understood the importance of the Westminster parliament and sought to influence policy in the metropole.

III Mercantile connections

This case study will reflect on the commercial connections that were established between Ireland and Jamaica in the long eighteenth century. There are fewer sources available in relation to transactions and volume, due to the lack of port records and surviving documents. However, there is some material that indicates that there were mercantile links between Jamaica and Ireland, which was conducted both via London and North America. This included the Irish trading house Nesbitt, based in London, who created a mercantile web that included Ireland and the West Indies. The aforementioned Samuel Watt, who had a connection with the Delap family, ventured out to Jamaica to establish a trading partnership there with some success. In a wider context, the partnership of Thomas Greg and Wadell Cunningham during the 1750s illustrated the extent of the trade between Ireland and Jamaica. These three examples will outline the extent of the trade connections between the two islands.

An example of an Irish trading house in London with Jamaican connections was that of the Nesbitt family. The founder of the company, Albert Nesbitt, had become a prolific trader in the beginning of the eighteenth century and was part of the Irish mercantile community in London.⁹⁷ The family had English origins but had moved to Ireland in the early seventeenth century. They settled in Donegal after Albert's father, Andrew, who had

⁹⁷ Louis Cullen, 'The two George Fitzgeralds of London (1718-1759)' in David Dickson, Jan Parmentier and Jane Ohlmeyer (eds), *Irish and Scottish mercantile networks in Europe and overseas in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries* (Ghent, 2007), p. 252.

fought with Charles I, obtained land in the county. Andrew had four sons and all sought to advance the family fortune. The eldest, Thomas Nesbitt, was close to the Clements family and had a political career in Ireland. Through his second marriage, Thomas obtained land in Lismore, Co Cavan, and sold the land close to Dunkineely in Co Donegal to his brother Albert. Two other brothers, Alexander and Robert, settled in Dublin.⁹⁸ How Albert entered trade in London is unclear, perhaps he was an apprentice under the merchant John Gould as he later married Gould's daughter Elizabeth.⁹⁹ By the turn of the century he had entered into a partnership with his brother-in-law Nathaniel Gould.¹⁰⁰ The Nesbitt family retained important connections with Ireland and while the Goulds traded with parts of Europe, Nesbitt began to explore aspects of the transatlantic trade. The Nesbitts were also involved in politics and both Albert and his cousin Arnold were elected to Westminster.¹⁰¹ On the death of his uncle in 1753, Arnold Nesbitt took over the business and expanded the network from its European bases to the Americas. Together with his two brothers, he set out to dominate the government supply market for the West Indies, which saw them shipping Irish goods for the British navy stationed in Jamaica.¹⁰² By the second half of the eighteenth century, they had become one of the most influential Irish merchant families in London, enjoying trade links with Jamaica and the rest of the Caribbean.

Bulk provisions from Ireland continued to find a ready market in the Caribbean, and Nesbitt's contacts in Cork and Dublin were important in supplying this demand.¹⁰³ Jamaicans

⁹⁸ Bernard Burke, *A genealogical and heraldic dictionary of the landed gentry of Great Britain and Ireland* (2 vols, London, 1863), ii, pp 1070-71.

⁹⁹ John Gould was described as a draper of London and a director of the East India Company. The family had a connection with Sir Alexander Cairnes through marriage. Albert's brother Alexander also married into the Gould family; see R. S. Boddington, *Pedigree of the family of Gould* (London, 1888), pp 3-6.

¹⁰⁰ 'Nesbitt, Arnold (?1721-79)' in L. Namier and J. Brooke (eds). *The history of parliament: the House of Commons 1754-1790* (London, 1964); D. W. Jones, 'Gould, Sir Nathaniel (1661-1728)' in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004). (<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/37477>)(2 Nov. 2015).

¹⁰¹ Thomas Truxes, 'London's Irish merchant community', in Dickson, Parmentier and Ohlmeyer, *Irish and Scottish mercantile networks*, p. 274.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 239.

¹⁰³ Craig Bailey, 'Nesbitts of London and their networks' in *ibid.*, p. 243.

were fond of Irish butter and salted beef, which in part sustained the trade.¹⁰⁴ The family also began to develop a long-term connection with Jamaica. They purchased an interest in the Duckenfield plantation, which was an indication of how significant the family considered their trade with the West Indies to be.¹⁰⁵ The Nesbitt family had no intention of settling in Jamaica and conducted their business affairs from London. Until Arnold's death in 1779, the Nesbitt family retained their interest in the plantation. On his passing, the merchant business was inherited by John Nesbitt, a nephew, while Arnold's two natural sons received the Jamaican investment. Neither had an interest in retaining it, as the holding had proven to be a considerable financial burden. The share in Duckenfield was soon disposed of, although the family maintained the contract for the supply of bulk goods to the plantation.¹⁰⁶ The business interests of the Nesbitts reached across the Atlantic and they often assisted other Irish families where it was in their interest. These relationships were vital in maintaining their interests in the West Indies. Their business in Jamaica was evidently one of great value considering they owned the share in Duckenfield.¹⁰⁷ The connections of the Nesbitts illustrated how London was central to the trade between Ireland and Jamaica and the importance of the imperial structures in the transatlantic trade.

In addition to the possessions on Antigua and Jamaica, the extended Delap family continued to have connections with the Caribbean. The Watt family from the Ramelton area had married into the Delap family, including James Watt Sr, who had four sons. The eldest, James Jr, remained in Ireland, while the second eldest, Samuel, decided to move to the Caribbean as a trader in Irish linen at the turn of the eighteenth century. A third, Andrew, entered business locally, while the youngest, David, would eventually join Samuel in the

¹⁰⁴ Edward Long, *A history of Jamaica* (3 vols, London, 1774) ii, p. 34.

¹⁰⁵ They also owned the Mount Nesbitt plantation on the island of Grenada, see Vere Longford Oliver, *Caribbeana* (5 vols, London, 1916) iv, 131-33.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁷ Craig Bailey, 'The Irish network: a study of ethnic patronage in London (1760-1840)' (Ph.D. thesis, King's College, London, 2004), pp 202-05.

Caribbean. The Watts on occasion used their connection with the Delap family to further their interests. Samuel's presence in the Caribbean was an illustration of the presence of an Irish trader in the Caribbean who, perhaps, was not as prolific as others. However, he had a direct link with Ireland through business and family connections, while using the opportunities that the imperial structures provided. With no property holdings that forced him to stay in one place, Samuel Watt displayed greater mobility and travelled across the Atlantic and around the Caribbean.¹⁰⁸

After staying with a Delap relative in Liverpool, Samuel ventured out to Barbados in the first half of 1801. He worked for the merchant company George Hall & Co., a family with connections to the town of Tully, Co. Donegal.¹⁰⁹ He traded Irish linen and other goods around the region and on occasion ventured out to what is now British Guyana, where the Hall family had business interests. He referred to George Hall on a number of occasions in the letters from Barbados, often in context of starting a business partnership.¹¹⁰ During his stay on Barbados, Watt wrote to his younger brother James and an uncle with whom he had some business dealings.¹¹¹ In 1806 he indicated that he had around £500 to invest in a partnership.¹¹² He returned to England and Ireland in 1808, with a view to going to Jamaica. In London, he entered into a partnership with Burrow and Co. and departed for the West Indies.¹¹³

Samuel Watt arrived in Jamaica on 29 August 1808 and settled in Kingston.¹¹⁴ At the same time, his younger brother David had arrived in London to learn the trade. A year later he found 'low prices of Irish linens of all descriptions (especially 4/4 from 12d.)' but

¹⁰⁸ The letters sent to Ireland by Samuel Delap are noted as the 'Jamaica letters' throughout this section and cover the period 1800-29; (PRONI, 'Jamaica letters', MIC135/1).

¹⁰⁹ James C. Brandow, *Genealogies of Barbados families* (Baltimore, 1983), pp 268-69.

¹¹⁰ 12 Apr. 1802 to 20 June 1807, 'Jamaica letters'.

¹¹¹ He remitted £130 to his uncle for linens and butter; 31 July 1804, 'Jamaica letters'.

¹¹² 3 Feb. 1806, 'Jamaica letters'.

¹¹³ 1 Apr. 1808, 'Jamaica letters'.

¹¹⁴ 18 Sept. 1808, 'Jamaica letters'.

managed to sell some of it at a profit margin of around twenty five per cent, from stock he had purchased months before.¹¹⁵ In the correspondence there was a regular mention of Andrew Bre[a]din Delap, who was listed as the owner of the Halifax plantation in the parish of Manchester.¹¹⁶ Watt displayed no intention of buying any property himself at that stage. By 1810 the decision was made that the youngest brother, David, was to be sent out to Jamaica to assist Samuel and he duly arrived in the summer of 1811.¹¹⁷ Over the next year, business remained slow and the fact that his co-partner Jeremiah Reddy was absent from the office in Kingston forced Samuel to travel ‘a distance of fifty miles’ to see him.¹¹⁸

Some time in 1814, Watt returned to England for business purposes and a family visit. He was forced to enter into litigation with Burrow and company, which, with the help of a Belfast merchant, John Martin, he was able to resolve. He returned to Jamaica in 1816, only to find his affairs in disarray and his younger brother quite ill. David died on the 8 August 1816. At this point the letters became more intermittent, until Samuel decided to travel back to Ireland in the summer of 1825.¹¹⁹ The correspondence then changed to letters from the agents that Samuel had appointed in Kingston. One of these was the son of his brother James, John Watt. The latter mentioned the enslaved that Samuel had left in his hands and continued to write to Samuel and later to his father after Samuel passed away in 1829.¹²⁰ The volume of the trade that the Watts were engaged in was difficult to estimate, but from the letters the impression arises that Samuel struggled on occasion. When the ship *Hugh James* came into Kingston harbour in September 1811, he found it difficult to supply her with enough cargo.¹²¹ Watts’ colonial experience in Jamaica illustrated the extent of the trade links of Irish

¹¹⁵ 7 May 1809, ‘Jamaica letters’.

¹¹⁶ ‘Return of proprietors of the parish of Manchester’ in *Jamaica Almanac* (1818).

¹¹⁷ 14 Jul. 1811, ‘Jamaica letters’.

¹¹⁸ There is a mention of a Jeremy Ready who owns fifty-two enslaved in the neighbouring parish of St Ann. In 1835 a Catherine Ready from St Mary received £140 7s. 1d. compensation for seven enslaved; see 28 Feb. 1812 ‘Jamaica letters’; ‘Jamaica St Mary 524’ (UCL Website).

¹¹⁹ 4 Jul. 1825, ‘Jamaica letters’.

¹²⁰ 13 Apr. 1829, ‘Jamaica letters’.

¹²¹ 3 Sept. 1811, ‘Jamaica letters’.

Dissenters that stretched across Ireland, France and the Caribbean. It highlighted how extended family relationships facilitated the mercantile interests that used the structures of Empire.

A different example of the trade connections between Ireland and Jamaica was the partnership between Wadell Cunningham and Thomas Greg. A successful partnership, the two were involved in both legal and illegal trade between Ireland, North America and the Caribbean, especially during the Seven Years War. Their letterbook covering the period 1756 to 1757 reveals a number of mercantile relationships with Jamaica.¹²² Much of it confirms that the Irish moved provisions to Jamaica and on occasion obtained logwood at Honduras. The two Irishmen did business with the Curtin and Parker partnership in Kingston, which consisted of Richard Curtin and Hugh Parker.¹²³ This included, for instance, the shipping of a number of candles to Jamaica that were valued at a total of £118 18s.0d for the account of Curtin & Parker.¹²⁴ Their correspondence involved the brig *Greg* (Captain Hugh Hathorn), which had sailed from Ireland with provisions of beef and pork. It was supposed to call at Barbados, St Eustatius and Jamaica to dispose of its cargo.¹²⁵ The journey was not without its dangers as French privateers could capture the ship. They completed the round trip over the summer of 1756.¹²⁶ Any journey across the Atlantic was insured, which ranged from £55 to £300. Goods ordered by Curtin & Parker included tallow, while the two merchant houses also corresponded about the price of rum.¹²⁷ The company also worked with the Kingston trading house Livingston and Gordon, through whom they traded in logwood from the Bay of Honduras.¹²⁸ Thomas Greg also employed the captain Nathaniel Sayers, who sailed from

¹²² *Letterbook of Greg & Cunningham, 1756-57 merchants of New York and Belfast*, Thomas M. Truxes (ed.) (Oxford, 2001), pp 70-71.

¹²³ *Jamaica Courant* (June 1754); *JAJ*, v, p. 27.

¹²⁴ 'Greg & Cunningham to Curtin & Parker, 29 October 1756' as reprinted in *Letterbook*, p. 104.

¹²⁵ 'Greg & Cunningham to Curtin & Parker, 4 November 1756' *ibid.*, 241.

¹²⁶ 'Greg & Cunningham to Walker and Woodridge (Barbados), 12 July 1756' *ibid.*, 171.

¹²⁷ 'Greg & Cunningham to Curtin & Parker, 4 November 1756' *ibid.*, 241.

¹²⁸ 'Wadell Cunningham to Hyde & Hamilton (Manchester), 10 May 1756' *ibid.*, 105-06.

New York to Jamaica in the brig *Ross* with Irish provisions and colonial lumber.¹²⁹ Wadell Cunningham also worked with the Irish-born Captain William Stewart and the ship *Charming Nancy*, who would also sail to the Bay of Honduras to obtain logwood.¹³⁰

The three mercantile case studies highlight the different trade connections between Jamaica and Ireland. They indicate that some, like the Nesbitts, were successful enough to become part owners in a plantation. Others, such as the Irish Dissenter Samuel Watt, managed to set up a trading house in Jamaica. It proved relatively profitable as Watt was able to retire to Ireland. The wider transatlantic links of the Greg-Cunningham partnership illustrated how the trade between the two islands would move via North America. This indicated that, much like Orla Power had demonstrated, the Irish merchants used a variety of methods to find opportunities and collaborations. It also illustrated how the structures of Empire facilitated the trade between Ireland and Jamaica.

The case studies in this chapter emphasise the impact of imperial control on local government during the Spanish Town and Privilege controversies. The chapter also demonstrates how the structures of Empire facilitated the trade between Ireland and Jamaica. The case study of Francis Delap provides an illustration of the Dissenter Irish presence in Jamaica and their links with the Scottish settlers on the island. His position in local government as provost marshall during the Spanish Town conflict highlights the impact of the imperial involvement. The publication in support of Delap's release brought a direct intervention with the recalling of Governor Knowles. Similarly, the Privilege Controversy illustrated the involvement of Nicholas Bourke, who published a pamphlet in support of the local planter faction in an attempt to lobby the metropolitan government. Both controversies underline the role of the Irish in the local Jamaican government as the imperial interest increased in the second half of the eighteenth century. The structures of Empire further

¹²⁹ Ibid., 110.

¹³⁰ 'Wadell Cunningham to Livingston & Gordon, 10 May 1756' *ibid.*, 104.

impacted life in Jamaica with the arrival of a large number of Irish army regiments around the period of the Haitian Revolution.

8 *The Irish in Jamaica and the Haitian Revolution*

The case studies in this chapter will outline the effect of the structures of Empire on the Protestant, Catholic and Dissenter Irish presence in Jamaica around the period of the Haitian Revolution. The four case studies will illustrate how actions in the metropole resulted in an increase in the Irish presence. The focus will be on the role of the military, especially in local government. The army became an important outlet for a large number of Irishmen by the end of the eighteenth century.¹ Many featured in the regiments that were sent over to Jamaica in the period 1790 to 1815.² The case studies will illustrate the impact of the high death rate in relation to the temporary aspect of the Irish military presence. While the Protestant Irish featured as officers in the British army, the Catholic Irish joined both the French and British armies.³ The chapter will also examine the role that the Irish played as officers in West India Regiments, which consisted of enslaved soldiers, and consider how Protestant Irish officers began to move in civil government and how they used the imperial structures to advance their careers.⁴

The case studies will demonstrate how the colonial experiences of the Protestant, Catholic and Dissenter Irish were closely linked to the army presence on the island. The first will consider George Nugent, the Protestant Irish governor and commander in chief in Jamaica. It will outline his connections with the Irish in Jamaica and the connection with Ireland during his tenure. The second case study will consider Hugh Lyle Carmichael, an Irish-born commander who was involved in the formation of the locally raised West India

¹ Stephen Brumwell, *Redcoats: the British soldier and war in the Americas, 1755-1763* (New York, 2006), p. 5; Edward J. Coss, *All for the King's shilling: the British soldier under Wellington, 1808-1814* (Norman, 2010), pp 80-81; Roger N. Buckley, *The British army in the West Indies: society and the military in the revolutionary age* (Gainesville, 1998), p. 100.

² Edward M. Spiers, 'Army organization and society in the nineteenth century' in Thomas Bartlett and Keith Jeffery (eds), *A military history of Ireland* (Cambridge, 1996), p. 335; Thomas Bartlett, 'Britishness, Irishness and the Act of Union' in Dáire Keogh and Kevin Whelan (eds), *Acts of union: the causes, contexts and consequences of the Act of Union* (Dublin, 2001), p. 257.

³ David P. Geggus, *Slavery, war and revolution: the British occupation of Saint Domingue 1793-1798* (Oxford, 1982), pp 388-91.

⁴ Edward M. Spiers, *The army and society 1815-1914* (London, 1983), pp 72-74.

Regiment, which consisted of enslaved Afro-Caribbean soldiers. The third case study will focus on the Catholic Irish presence in Jamaica and the link with the French army. The Catholic Church was re-established and their records will be used to assess the extent of the Irish connections. The fourth case study focuses on the aftermath of the revolution and the move of Protestant Irish military commanders such as Henry Conran, Eyre Coote and John Keane into civil government in Jamaica. The case studies will illustrate how the imperial structures had an impact on the Irish in Jamaica, especially through the military presence.

I Nugent

In July 1801, George Nugent arrived in Jamaica with a large number of soldiers from Ireland. Together with his family, Nugent remained on the island from 1801 to 1806, while the regiments were stationed in barracks close to Kingston. Through his late father Robert Nugent (1709-88) he was connected to the political establishment in Ireland and George briefly held a seat in the Irish parliament.⁵ When commanding the army in Ireland he had been stationed in Belfast, where he married Maria Skinner in 1797. This case study will focus on Nugent's links with Ireland and his family's Irish connections in Jamaica. During his tenure as governor, Nugent received several visitors from Ireland who, for instance, used his Irish family connections to gain an audience. In addition, the army connections resulted in a number of social interactions with Irish officers, while the family also engaged with several Irish settlers in Jamaica. This case study will illustrate how these three aspects featured during the five-year stay of the Nugents in Jamaica.

As governor, Nugent was visited by a number of people from Ireland or those who had Irish connections. Arthur James Plunkett, Lord Fingal, a distant relation of Nugent,

⁵ E. M. Johnston-Liik, *MPs in Dublin: companion to history of the Irish parliament, 1692-1800* (Belfast, 2006), p. 111.

supported two men who arrived in Jamaica and requested an audience with the governor.⁶ In May 1803, a Mr Smith visited Nugent with Plunkett's recommendation, while the barrister Alexander White, originally from North Carolina, arrived in 1804 and sought to secure a government appointment.⁷ White apparently failed to do so, but was listed in 1805 and 1808 as a barrister on the island.⁸ Other connections included a visit by Francis Dobbs, the Irish author and M.P., who had left Ireland in 1803 with a recommendation from Lord Gosford to introduce himself to Nugent.⁹ During the eighteenth century, the Dobbs family had been involved in a dispute over the ownership of the Fort Stewart estate in the parish of St George, originally owned by John Stewart.¹⁰ In his will, Stewart left instructions to support his Irish relatives with £1000 in the event that his estate was to come to one of his grandsons.¹¹ Upon his death in April 1748, John Stewart owned nearly 200 enslaved and his plantation had an operating profit of nearly £8000.¹² Dobbs had married Jane Stewart, a relation of John, and had become interested in the West Indies after his political career had stalled in 1801. He exchanged letters with Dr Matthew Gregory in Jamaica, before sailing to the island.¹³ Dobbs visited Nugent twice in 1804, but his intention was for a brief stay and to prepare a position for his son.¹⁴ He was briefly a lieutenant of the St Catherine militia, which indicated that he remained in the Spanish Town area.¹⁵ Dobbs returned to Ireland and the Fort Stewart

⁶ Nugent's father had been married to Emilia Plunkett. Arthur James Plunkett was the eighth earl; see William Courthope (ed.), *Debrett's complete peerage of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland* (London, 1838), p. 530.

⁷ Maria Nugent, *Lady Nugent's journal of her residence in Jamaica from 1801 to 1805* ed. Philip Wright (Kingston, 2002), p. 198.

⁸ White was admitted to Gray's Inn in 1763, Joseph Foster (ed), *The register of admissions to Grey's Inn 1521-1889* (London, 1889), p. 383; 'Civil list' in *Jamaica Almanac* (1808).

⁹ 'Francis Dobbs, Dublin, to Lord Gosford', 23 Sept. 1802 (PRONI, D1606/1/1/239); *Lady Nugent's journal*, pp 180-81.

¹⁰ The family was originally from Ballintoy, Co. Antrim; see George Hill, 'The Stewarts of Ballintoy' in *Ulster Journal of Archaeology* vii, (Jan. 1901), pp 9-17.

¹¹ He also left £1000 for the benefit of 'poor children of protestant parents' in Coleraine to learn trades; see 'Will of John Stewart, 20 October 1748' (PRONI, D162/39).

¹² 'Account Book of Fort Stewart Plantation', *ibid*.

¹³ 'Draft Letter from Arthur Dobbs to Matthew Gregory', c. 1751' (PRONI, D162/5)

¹⁴ Presumably his son Francis Jr, who died in 1805, *London Review* (1805), p. 163.

¹⁵ 'Militia of Jamaica' in *Jamaica almanac* (1805).

plantation was put into receivership by 1811.¹⁶ In June 1803 Nugent was visited by a Mr Black ‘from Ireland, with letters’, who in all likelihood was a member of the Belfast merchant family.¹⁷ One of them, John Black, had settled in Trinidad and retained connections with Belfast and Bordeaux, where his relations had traded with the West Indies for generations.¹⁸ In the same year, John Black was appointed a judge on Trinidad and became the chief justice in 1806.¹⁹ He owned a plantation close to Port of Spain and died in 1837.²⁰

The encounters with Smith, White, Dobbs and Black illustrated how the Irish Atlantic connections operated through informal links. For instance, Dobbs’ choice in approaching Lord Gosford, a landowner in Armagh, revealed the use of connections in Ireland. Gosford’s daughter was married to the son of the duke of Portland, who had been instrumental in obtaining the appointment of governor for Nugent.²¹ The delivery of letters by John Black had a Belfast connection, where Nugent had been stationed as previously noted. The meetings highlighted the nature of the transatlantic links that the Nugents experienced during their sojourn on the island.

Besides his position as governor, Nugent was also commander in chief of the island.²² He had been ordered to bring with him the 85th regiment of foot, which Nugent had been instructed to raise in 1793. Before their departure, the regiment had recruited 1,800 Irish

¹⁶ *Jamaica almanac* (1811); in 1835 the plantation was owned by the Mitchell Brothers (London), who received £7416 3s. 3d. in compensation for 426 enslaved.

¹⁷ ‘Black Family Letters’ (PRONI, D/719), *Lady Nugent’s journal*, p. 161. There was also a John Black, elected for the parish of Trelawney in 1807, who died in 1827 and was originally from Scotland, see *The Scots Magazine* (Edinburgh, 1827) xcvi, p. 384.

¹⁸ Black’s father George was a notable merchant in Belfast and his brother was a customs officer in the city; see Isaac W. Ward, ‘The Black Family’ in *Ulster Journal of Archaeology*, viii (Oct. 1902), pp 176-88.

¹⁹ Thomas J Howell (ed.), *A complete collection of state trials* (34 vols, London, 1822) xxx, pp 560-72; Pierre F. McCallum, *Travels in Trinidad* (Liverpool, 1805), pp 176-78.

²⁰ The Barataria estate for which his wife received the compensation of £689 0s. 3d. in relation to thirteen enslaved. See ‘Trinidad 551’ (PofS) (UCL website).

²¹ A. Aspinall, *The later correspondence of George III; January 1802 to December 1807* (5 vols, Cambridge, 1967) iv, p. 2389.

²² ‘List of British army in Jamaica’ in *Jamaica Almanac* (1802).

volunteers.²³ In February 1802 they were joined by the 87th (later the Royal Irish Fusiliers), with many Irish in their ranks, almost a third of their total number.²⁴ The 18th regiment of foot, Royal Irish Regiment, which was stationed on the island from 1805 until 1817, largely fell victim to disease, losing 50 officers and 300 soldiers. Nugent's regiment was not the first one with Irish connections that arrived on the island. The 83rd had been raised in Ireland by William Fitch and was sent to Jamaica in 1795 to engage the Trelawney Maroons.²⁵ It brought a considerable Irish military presence to the island, which the Nugents engaged with.

The Nugents socialised with several army officers; these included officers from George's own 83rd regiment and Nugent's brother-in-law, Jonathan Downes Skinner, who was stationed at Fort George in Port Antonio.²⁶ One of the men was a Mr O'Farrell, a lieutenant in the 83rd, who had managed to survive the assault on the Maroons. He arrived in the company of other officers who had been stationed on the island for some time.²⁷ Nugent's wife Maria had an unpleasant encounter on Christmas Eve 1801 when she met 'some vulgar Messrs. Gallagher, from Ireland'.²⁸ This was a reference to Patrick Gallagher, an assistant surgeon, and John Gallagher, who was an ensign with the 4th West India Regiment.²⁹ In August 1801, Captain John O'Brien of the 67th regiment arrived for dinner with the governor. In 1810 he was listed as the owner of the Mountain Spring plantation in the western part of the parish of St Andrew. This appeared to be a small operation with a modest

²³ Steve Brown, 'British regiments and the men who led them 1793-1815: 85th Regiment of Foot', in *Military subjects: organization, strategy and tactics* (2013) (http://www.napoleon-series.org/military/organization/Britain/Infantry/Regiments/c_85thFoot.html) (18 Mar. 2014).

²⁴ The 87th Regiment of Foot was raised in Dublin by Sir John Doyle in the aftermath of the French Revolution; see Richard Cannon, *Historical record of the eighty-seventh regiment, or the Royal Irish Fusiliers* (London, 1853), pp 1-9.

²⁵ Edward William Bray, *Memoirs and services of the eighty-third regiment (county of Dublin) from 1793 to 1907* (London, 1908), pp 13-14.

²⁶ He was later appointed collector of customs in Savannah-la-Mar. One of Maria's cousins, Sampson Gideon Kemble, held the same position in Kingston; see *Lady Nugent's journal*, pp 93, 100.

²⁷ British army, *Jamaica Almanac* (1802); *Lady Nugent's journal*, p. 53.

²⁸ When observing the enslaved after she had provided them with beef she exclaimed that 'I only wish the poor Irish were half as well off'; *Lady Nugent's journal*, p. 53.

²⁹ *Jamaica almanac* (1804); *A list of all the officers of army and royal marines on full and half-pay* (London, 1805), p. 299.

sixty enslaved and was probably a coffee plantation.³⁰ However, it did illustrate that some of the Irish soldiers made Jamaica their permanent home.

On another occasion, the Nugents were visited by a 'Mr D'Arcy, from Cork, recommended by Baron Hussey', who probably was Joseph D'Arcy from the Royal Regiment of Artillery stationed in Port Royal.³¹ The Dublin-born Colonel Mellifont was an example of someone who had risen through the ranks and had become one of the leading officers of Nugent's 85th.³² In 1804, he suggested that Maria Nugent recuperate in his quarters at the Stoney Hill barracks, where she was attended to by her orderly Sergeant Murphy and the regimental doctor, Doughty.³³ Eventually she moved to the Mount Salus plantation, then owned by Edward H. Plunkett, a captain in the St Andrew militia.³⁴ Plunkett and his wife Maria were originally from Dublin and were Catholic. Maria Plunkett died on 23 November 1804 and was buried in the garden of the Temple Hall plantation.³⁵ These encounters illustrated the character of the Irish military encounters of the Nugents, which ranged from officers to infantry soldiers and surgeons. Considering the context of the Haitian Revolution, the interaction with the military took precedence and fits in with Nugent's army background. That the Protestant Irish Nugent family had links with the Catholic Plunkett family was not unusual in the region, as Power had already indicated.³⁶

One of Nugent's commitments on the island involved improving the lives of the soldiers as the death rate remained high. He set up the barracks on Stoney Hill, north of

³⁰ It did not appear to be a profitable operation and by 1833 it was in the ownership of Margaret Samuel with only eighteen enslaved; *Jamaica Almanac* (1833).

³¹ *Lady Nugent's journal*, p. 163.

³² Brown, 'British regiments'.

³³ *Lady Nugent's journal*, p. 205.

³⁴ Plunkett had sold the plantation to James Dickson by 1818; see *Jamaica Almanac* (1802); *ibid* (1818).

³⁵ She was noted in the burial records of the Spanish priest Basilio Suarez de Lema, see section iii below.

³⁶ Orla Power, 'Friend, foe or family? Catholic creoles, French Huguenots, Scottish dissenters: aspects of the Irish diaspora at St. Croix, Danish West Indies, c.1760' in Niall Whelehan (ed.), *Transnational perspectives on modern Irish history* (Abingdon, 2015), pp 30-44.

Kingston, to bring relief for the European soldiers.³⁷ Owing to the high death rate, there was a great reduction in numbers, as many of the new recruits perished after arriving in Jamaica. This was illustrated by the experiences of 'Mrs Hamilton, the wife of one of the Irish soldiers of the 85th', a wet nurse for Maria Nugent.³⁸ After the birth of their son, George Jr, on 12 October 1802, Hamilton became part of the extended household. She was treated as a staff member, but was unfortunate enough to lose both her young son and her husband, who had been stationed at the Stoney Hill barracks, in the space of a few months.³⁹ The soldiers and their officers were a temporary feature on the island, as they were involved in different campaigns against the French in the region. During his time as governor, Nugent had laid the foundations for the permanent army barracks at Up Park Camp and Stoney Hill. The latter was used to allow new recruits from Europe to acclimatise, while nursing others who had fallen ill.⁴⁰ Despite this approach, the death rate among the Irish soldiers remained high, emphasising the temporary character of the increase in the Irish presence on the island.

Besides the Irish military links and visitors from Ireland, the governor and his wife encountered a number of the Irish who had settled permanently on the island. These included mostly those associated with the planters, like the Murphy family. When the Nugents arrived, Thomas Murphy was both a member of the assembly and a local magistrate in the parish of St Mary. The connection between the Nugents and Murphys was largely of a social nature. The governor and his wife enjoyed the coolness of the Decoy and Ramble estates owned by the Murphys, which were both situated in the hills of the parish.⁴¹ At the beginning of 1802, the governor toured the island to inspect some of the local militias in the company of Simon

³⁷ 'General Nugent to the marquis of Buckingham, May 25, 1802' in Duke of Buckingham, *Memoirs of the court and cabinets of George the Third: 1800-1805* (4 vols, London, 1855) iii, pp 227-32.

³⁸ *Lady Nugent's journal*, pp 118-22.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 151.

⁴⁰ Edward Long, *History of Jamaica*, (3 vols, London, 1774) ii, p. 132.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 78-79.

Taylor and visited Golden Grove.⁴² Nugent crossed the Blue Mountains into the parish of St George; a Mr Edward Fitzgerald and Mr Murphy joined them at Spring Garden estate. The next day, he visited the Fitzgeralds at their Kildare plantation in the mountains of St Mary. Maria Nugent described Mrs Fitzgerald as ‘a very pleasing, sensible, motherly woman, and like her much’.⁴³ The plantation itself would pass on to their son Edward Dalling Fitzgerald, who maintained a large operation, with 332 enslaved on the property. He died in 1815, which introduced a period of lengthy litigation. Edward Dalling had three sons, Thomas, William and Edward Jr, who were all underage at the time of the death of their father. Their mother Sarah Genery had to ensure she received the £600 annuity as stipulated in the will as well as preventing Edward Dalling’s brother Thomas from obtaining the plantation.⁴⁴ In 1828 the Kildare plantation was the subject of a case brought to the high court of chancery in London due to outstanding arrears on the mortgage and the property was seized.⁴⁵ No compensation was claimed for Kildare and by 1838 it was in the possession of John Oldham, who was listed as employing 230 apprentices on the property.⁴⁶ The Nugents also visited the Porus estate in the parish of Clarendon owned by ‘Mr Conolly’, an absentee from Ireland. From the records it appears that Porus did not remain in Irish hands and in 1816 it was owned by William Hylton and listed as having sixty-one enslaved on the property.⁴⁷ The tour illustrated that in Nugent’s time, the Irish continued to own plantations on the island and engage with the institution of slavery. In the case of the Kildare plantation, it demonstrated how a family possession was lost due to financial difficulties. The Nugents’ social links with the Murphy

⁴² During their visit, the connection with Ireland was quickly made apparent when Maria mentioned that: ‘the housekeeper’s name was Nelly Nugent. She told me that her father was a Mr Nugent, from Ireland, who had been some years ago upon that estate’. This was perhaps Jenny Nugent (b. 1788), who in 1820 was listed as owning five enslaved and had increased this to seventeen in 1824. There is no further mention of her in the compensation entries; *Jamaica almanac* (1820); *ibid.* (1824); *Lady Nugent’s journal*, pp 68-69.

⁴³ *Lady Nugent’s journal*, 74.

⁴⁴ ‘Genery vs. Fitzgerald’ in John A. Dunlap, *Reports of cases decided in the High Court of Chancery 1821-1828* (London, 1844) iv, pp 469-70.

⁴⁵ ‘Fitzgerald vs. Stewart’ in Nicholas Simons (ed.), *Reports of cases decided in the High Court of Chancery 1827-1829* (London, 1831) ii, pp 33-343.

⁴⁶ *Jamaica almanac* (1838).

⁴⁷ *Jamaica almanac* (1816).

family highlighted how the family had informal links with the Irish settlers in Jamaica. The Nugents encountered people from Ireland on other occasions, for example when they attended church in Spanish Town, where Maria complained that the Reverend Richard Supple, who read at the service, had 'rather a discordant voice and Irish accent'.⁴⁸

The Nugents' colonial experience featured the Irish in the three different aspects that were presented in this case study. It first illustrated the Irish Atlantic links and the use of informal connections in the context of Empire. Second, it highlighted Nugent's military background and the Irish army personnel on the island. The death rate among the soldiers and their families prevented them from making Jamaica their permanent home. The Nugents' civilian encounters, with, for instance, the Murphys and Fitzgeralds, highlighted that they socialised with the permanent Irish residents on the island. Although the Nugents left Jamaica in 1806, the army presence continued well into the next decade, and included Irish recruits and officers. This included regiments with a number of Irish troops, with a contemporary account estimating the number of troops on the island at around 2,000 in 1808.⁴⁹ The Nugent case study illustrates the character of the Irish military presence and how the structures of Empire facilitated their increased presence.

II Carmichael

This case study will consider the presence in Jamaica of the Irish-born Protestant Hugh Lyle Carmichael, who led the West India Regiment. Carmichael was born in Dublin, where his father was a clerk of the Crown. The family had Scottish and Presbyterian origins, and he followed in his grandfather's footsteps by enlisting with the British army in the 1780s.⁵⁰ He was sent out to the Caribbean in the same decade and featured in the Leeward Islands. As

⁴⁸ The surname Supple was of Anglo-Norman origin and had some connections to Co. Cork. See *Lady Nugent's journal*, p. 44.

⁴⁹ John Stewart, *An account of Jamaica* (London, 1808), p. 64.

⁵⁰ Craig Bailey, *Irish London, middleclass migration in the global eighteenth century* (Liverpool, 2013), p. 37; 'Lyle of the Oaks' in Bernard Burke, *A genealogical and heraldic history of the landed gentry of Great Britain and Ireland* (2 vols, London, 1871) ii, p. 829.

disease and under recruitment caused perpetual problems for the British authorities in the 1790s, the London government decided to raise around eight regiments locally in the Caribbean. These largely consisted of Afro-Caribbean recruits, mostly enslaved, some of whom had already been engaged in combat under the guise of Rangers around the Caribbean basin.⁵¹ Despite concerns raised by the local settler elite, the authorities implemented this plan using European officers to command the troops. During the Haitian Revolution the eight regiments were expanded to twelve, while the authorities included the new arrivals from Africa prior to declaring the slave trade illegal. Carmichael led the 2nd West India Regiment from 1797, while it was stationed in Jamaica from 1802.⁵² This case study will outline the colonial experience of the Irish officers involved in the West India Regiment, especially concerning their relationship with the enslaved troops. The period was not without controversy, and in May 1807 the regiment suffered a revolt that resulted in the death of an Irish officer. It will highlight Carmichael's career in the context of the Irish and Empire and his views on the Afro-Caribbean soldiers that he had under his command.

The 2nd regiment was raised in 1795 under Samuel Graham on the island of St Vincent, raising 400 men, most of whom were transferred from the St Vincent Rangers.⁵³ They saw combat during the second Carib War (1795-97), with a number of Irish officers enlisted under Graham, including John Sankey Darley and James Flagherty.⁵⁴ By the end of the campaign fewer than 150 men had survived and the injured Graham was forced to return to England. Upon taking charge, Carmichael increased the troop numbers and moved first to Grenada in 1797, then to Tobago and Trinidad in 1800 and eventually to Jamaica in 1802.⁵⁵ The arrival of the regiment in Jamaica was not without controversy and the assembly had

⁵¹ Claudius Fergus, '“Dread of Insurrection”: abolitionism, security, and labor in Britain's West Indian Colonies, 1760-1823' in *The William and Mary Quarterly* lxxvi (Oct. 2009), pp 757-80.

⁵² John Philippart, *The royal military calendar* (5 vols, London 1820), pp 347-48.

⁵³ Samuel Graham, *Memoir of General Graham* (Edinburgh, 1862), pp 213-14.

⁵⁴ Flagherty was the quartermaster; J. E. Caulfield, *100 years' history of the 2nd West India Regiment: 1795-1892* (London, 1896), pp 7-8.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 16-24.

tried to obstruct its stationing on the island for most of 1801. Previously, the local lawmakers had refused to finance the raising of the 6th West India Regiment, forcing the British government to send over the aforementioned 83rd to combat the Maroon uprising.⁵⁶ The 2nd West India Regiment finally arrived in December 1802, and Carmichael joined Nugent's staff as an aide-de-camp.⁵⁷ He was a regular presence at meetings together with one of his officers, John Sankey Darley, also from Dublin. When the regiment landed on the island, it counted 600 men and was split into battalions and spread across the island. At this point the entire regiment included thirty-two officers (including hospital staff) of European descent.⁵⁸ The Irish involvement in the West India Regiments illustrated how they featured both as ordinary soldiers and as officers. Carmichael's early career also demonstrated the degree of mobility that the army facilitated, as he moved through the ranks.

The 2nd West India Regiment had been moved to the island to defend it against any possible French attack while martial law was declared. In 1804, Nugent suspended martial law and the regiment returned to Fort Augusta.⁵⁹ Officers that were attached to the regiment tended to move regularly between regiments; an example of this was Thomas Brereton from Ireland, who first served under his uncle Colonel Coghlan in the 45th regiment of foot in the West Indies.⁶⁰ After a number of engagements in the Danish West Indies, Brereton ended up in Jamaica, where he was made a lieutenant of the 2nd West India Regiment. He was quickly put on a secondment to the 1st West India Regiment that was moved to the island of Jersey. He returned to the West Indies in 1805, where he served under his cousin Robert Brereton,

⁵⁶ This regiment would eventually be raised and sent to the Bahamas; see (National Archives (Kew), WO 12/11542); Roger N. Buckley, 'Slave or freedman: The question of the legal status of the British West India soldier, 1795-1807' in *Caribbean Studies* xvii (Oct. 1977), p. 96.

⁵⁷ *Jamaica almanac* (1802).

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ Caulfield, *West India regiment*, p. 26.

⁶⁰ Colonel Andrew Coghlan, the 45th regiment spent much of the 1780s and 1790s in the Eastern Caribbean, where they fought the French; see Philip H. Dalbiac, *History of the 45th: 1st Nottinghamshire Regiment* (London, 1902), pp 14-19. Not to be confused with lieutenant general Roger Coghlan, who had joined the Connaught Rangers in 1779, transferred to the 60th regiment of foot and moved to Jamaica in the 1780s; see *Gentleman's Magazine* (1835), pp 321-22.

then governor of St Lucia.⁶¹ In 1805, the 2nd regiment counted 39 officers (including hospital staff) including ensigns Joseph Walsh and G. Connolly. The political establishment continued to take issue with the presence of the enslaved in the West India Regiment, leaving Carmichael as the commanding officer engaged in a number of political confrontations. The West India Regiment provided some of the Irish officers like Carmichael, Brereton and Darley with the opportunity to have a career. For others, like quartermaster Flagherty, the unhealthy situation proved fatal. The Irish link with the West India Regiments also illustrated how informal connections through extended family links connected them with positions within the British army. The unhealthy situation for the soldiers continued to greatly decrease their number, as Carmichael was to experience himself during his stay in Jamaica.

Hugh Lyle Carmichael, an Irish-born soldier from a family of Scottish descent, made his career in the Caribbean. His father, who died in 1776, had trained as a lawyer and became a crown clerk of the province of Leinster.⁶² Hugh married Catherine, the daughter of Dr John Farrall, and together they had one son, John.⁶³ After joining the army, Carmichael was soon created captain in the 22nd regiment of foot, raised by major general William Crosbie in 1793.⁶⁴ It sailed to the Caribbean in the same year, where the Crosbie family owned a sugar plantation.⁶⁵ In October 1794 Carmichael was promoted to lieutenant colonel in the regiment of Sir William Myers, also stationed on the Leeward Islands.⁶⁶ In 1797 he received the command of the 2nd West India Regiment, and for a brief period he functioned as the lieutenant governor of Tobago in 1801.⁶⁷ The next year he brought the 2nd West India Regiment from Trinidad to Jamaica. He retained a link with Ireland throughout his period in

⁶¹ James Dodsley, *Annual register* (London, 1833), p. 180.

⁶² *Gentleman's Magazine* (Dublin, 1776) xlvi, p. 320.

⁶³ Bernard Burke, *The general armory of England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales* (London, 1884), p. 347.

⁶⁴ *The Scots Magazine* (Edinburgh, 1793) lvi, p. 64.

⁶⁵ The Crosbie estate on the island of Antigua, Antigua 26 (Crosbie Estate, Dickenson Bay), (UCL website).

⁶⁶ *A list of the officers of the army and marines* (London, 1798), p.19; *The court and city register* (1801), p. 172.

⁶⁷ Keith O. Laurence, *Tobago in Wartime, 1793-1815* (Kingston, 1995), pp 200-14.

the Caribbean with the ownership of a piece of land near Ballinderry in Co. Londonderry that he leased out.⁶⁸

Carmichael found himself in a difficult position in Jamaica, as he was in command of a regiment that contained enslaved soldiers. This caused a degree of anxiety among the white settlers of the island. He had worked himself up to the rank of lieutenant colonel by the end of the eighteenth century. Besides his command of the 2nd West India Regiment, he was also appointed brigadier general of Jamaica in 1803.⁶⁹ Carmichael appeared to be an astute man, who had a very good understanding of the island as a whole. He was a close advisor of Nugent and his family, where his ten-year experience of being a soldier in the Caribbean was valued by the governor.⁷⁰ Carmichael had arranged for a nephew to join him on the island, Hugh Cowen, who also served in the 2nd West India Regiment. Unfortunately, Cowen fell victim to yellow fever and later succumbed to the illness, leaving Carmichael 'very distraught'.⁷¹ In April 1805 Carmichael fell ill with yellow fever himself and was sent to the parish of St Thomas in the East to recuperate. He complained how some of his best soldiers succumbed to disease while on duty monitoring an area of a possible revolt.⁷² Apparently, Carmichael was prevented from leaving his position as 'unfortunately, his finances are in such a state, that his emoluments are of the utmost consequence to his family'.⁷³ Unlike many of the army men, Carmichael managed to outlive many of his contemporaries and remained in active service in the Caribbean.

The local responsibilities of the army were a continuous source of conflict between Carmichael and the local assembly, who argued for military protection but failed to provide financial support for it. Previously on Tobago, Carmichael had encountered similar resistance

⁶⁸ 'Lease of part of the lands of Ballinderry', 20 Aug. 1807 (PRONI, D2757/7/1).

⁶⁹ Andrew Kippis (ed.), *The new annual register* (London, 1804), p. 74.

⁷⁰ Maria Nugent was given 'General Carmichael's account of the state of the country, and the observations he had made on his little tour, from which he returned this morning'; *Lady Nugent's journal*, p. 166.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 193.

⁷² Buckley, *British army in the West Indies*, p. 80.

⁷³ *Lady Nugent's journal*, p. 230 (emoluments refers to his pay).

to the use of Afro-Caribbean soldiers in the defence of the island. His experiences in the Leeward Islands and of the different theatres of war perhaps made him value the soldiers that he had under his command. The presence of his nephew Hugh Cowen indicated that Carmichael continued to retain a connection with Ireland, which was underlined by his continuous ownership of a piece of land there. It highlighted the importance of the informal connections that Carmichael maintained, including with his extended family.

A revolt by the enslaved soldiers in Jamaica illustrated the difficulties of Carmichael's tenure and his commitment to his Afro-Caribbean troops. The incident involved the 2nd West India Regiment, who were stationed at Fort Augusta in May 1807.⁷⁴ The regiment had recently incorporated some of the enslaved who had arrived on the island prior to the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade.⁷⁵ Around thirty took up arms in the mistaken belief that they could secure a return passage to Africa if they did so. In the process two officers were killed, among them John Sankey Darley, who had been with the regiment since its inception.⁷⁶ He had been given the rank of major, and was one of the leading officers in the fort at the time. Darley had been performing a drill with some of the new recruits outside the fort when the uprising began. Together with the other officers he re-entered the stronghold and engaged in combat with the African soldiers and was fatally wounded. An inscription in reference to his death was installed at Fort Augusta.⁷⁷ The assembly used the incident to pursue Carmichael further by demanding that he come to testify before a committee. The conflict exposed the tensions and the level of mistrust that existed between the large army

⁷⁴ Thomas Southey, *Chronological history of the West Indies* (3 vols, London, 1827) iii, pp 407-08.

⁷⁵ Legislation prohibiting the trade came into effect on the last day of 1807.

⁷⁶ *Gentleman's Magazine*, lxxvii, p. 743.

⁷⁷ It read: 'Sacred to the memory of John Sankey Darley major of the 2nd West India Regiment who bravely lost his life in the zealous discharge of his duty on the 27th of May 1808. His conduct as a man and a soldier, endearing him to all, he died beloved and regretted by his family friends and brother officers with the deepest sorrow this last sad tribute is paid by his affectionate father George Darley of the city of Dublin aged 80 years, Nov. 12th 1810'. (James H. Lawrence-Archer, *Monumental inscriptions of the British West Indies* (London, 1875), pp 74-75.)

contingent on the island and the local elite.⁷⁸ There was unease about some of the soldiers of the 60th Rifles and the policy of recruiting the enslaved into the West India Regiments.⁷⁹ The reactionary tendencies of the planters induced them to focus on Carmichael as an uncompromising soldier and exponent of the British army apparatus, who took little consideration of local customs and traditions. In the end, the metropolitan government supported the local legislators, and Carmichael was forced to appear before the committee.⁸⁰

Carmichael supported the campaign for the testimony of the Afro-Caribbean soldiers in the West India Regiments to be made admissible in a civil court. Previously, the enslaved had no legal rights. Carmichael, who was loyal to his troops, ensured that these legal restrictions did not apply to his soldiers.⁸¹ Carmichael was involved in an attack on Santo Domingo in 1808 that repelled the French from the Spanish part of the island of Hispaniola.⁸² In contrast to Nugent, Carmichael never returned to Europe and his period in civil government was brief. Throughout his command he was an advocate of his Afro-Caribbean soldiers, even after the revolt of 1807. The Carmichael case study illustrated the transient nature of military service in the Caribbean and the continuous health hazards associated with the stay. The combination of these two circumstances presented Carmichael with an opportunity to move through the ranks. From the outset, he engaged with the Afro-Caribbean soldiers in his regiment and defended their military abilities despite the Fort Augusta revolt. Carmichael's close links with Nugent and the presence of a family relation illustrates the importance of informal Irish links that functioned through the structures of Empire.

⁷⁸ *JAJ*, xii, 57-63.

⁷⁹ An army unit that consisted of many nationalities, including French, Irish and German, raised during the American War of Independence, see Stewart, *Account of Jamaica*, p. 64.

⁸⁰ *JAJ*, xii, 57-63.

⁸¹ Buckley, *British army in the West Indies*, pp 197-98.

⁸² Southey, *History of the West Indies* iii, pp 435-41.

III *Catholic Irish*

This case study will consider the impact of the Haitian Revolution on the Catholic Irish presence in Jamaica. In addition, it will illustrate the consequence of the Catholic French-Irish soldiers on the island. The increasing number of Irish Catholic soldiers on the island caused a degree of unease. While the restrictions on Catholics had largely been removed, there was a fear of a possible uprising among the Irish infantry soldiers, who had been pressed into the British army after 1798.⁸³ The Catholic Irish soldiers featured in three aspects; firstly as recruits in the general British army; secondly as rank and file in the Irish Brigade, which was led by former French-Irish officers; and thirdly they formed part of the remnants of the Irish from the French army transferred to Jamaica. This case study will consider the impact of these three different Catholic Irish soldiers in Jamaica in the context of Empire and their relationship with the white settlers. In addition, the period witnessed the reinstating of the Catholic Church in Jamaica, led by the Irish priest Anthony Quigly. The case study will outline the Catholic Irish presence in the congregation to highlight their colonial experience in the white settler society in Jamaica.

The influx of French refugees and the successes of enslaved uprising during the Haitian Revolution brought unease among the white settlers of Jamaica. They feared a scenario where the enslaved would take control of the island. In this climate of fear, the increased Irish Catholic presence appeared to add to the tensions. Suspecting insubordination from the Irish rank and file, the governor ‘made enquiry respecting the two sentries’ who he found to be Catholic Irish. They had been ‘placed at the front door of the King’s House, during prayers; and found that they are Irish convicts, of notoriously bad character, and the rest of the guard chiefly recruits, from the French prisoners’.⁸⁴ With Nugent finding that former convicts guarded his official residence, it indicated how the presence of the Catholic

⁸³ Buckley, *British Army in the West Indies*, p. 80.

⁸⁴ These appear to be the men from the French 3rd Irish Brigade; see *Lady Nugent’s journal*, p. 187.

Irish soldiers caused a degree of anxiety on the island, reminiscent of the French invasion of 1694. However, the Catholic Irish army presence in Jamaica was diverse and included a number of officers.

Besides soldiers stationed on the island and on guard duty, a number of French officers of the Irish Catholic Brigade were invited to an audience with Governor Nugent. They included a colonel, Jean Raymond Bourke, who was a member of an Irish family settled in Lorient.⁸⁵ Bourke, as a professional soldier, had been involved in a number of campaigns under General Leclerc, including an expedition to Ireland during the 1798 rebellion. In conversation he feigned not to understand English, causing Marie Nugent an embarrassment.⁸⁶ Some exiles, including a 'Monsieur Fitzgerald', begged the governor to proceed with the actual annexation of St Domingue by the British.⁸⁷ This request was beyond Nugent's remit and Fitzgerald, together with other former French property owners, moved to North America. That the governor socialised with the Catholic French-Irish officers indicated a degree of acceptance and pointed towards a difference between the officer class and the ordinary soldiers. While the Catholic soldiers from Ireland were perceived as a possible threat, the French-Irish Catholic officers were treated as equals. It confirmed a social difference, as further evidenced by the early records of the Catholic Church in Kingston.

In the last decade of the eighteenth century, the relaxing of laws in relation to Catholics in civilian and military life brought the Catholic Church back to Jamaica. During the second half of the eighteenth century, an increasing number of Spanish citizens arrived in Jamaica to engage in the inter-island trade. As the Spanish had joined the British in the war

⁸⁵ A city on the south Brittany coast with strong Atlantic trading connections; see Yves Banallec, 'Biographie du général Jean Raymond Charles Bourke' in *Les Cahiers du Pays de Ploëmer*, xvi (2006), pp 16-20.

⁸⁶ Maria noted that 'General Churchill had a great deal of fun' in questioning while she and the General were 'indiscreet enough to make our remarks to each other in English'. She later found that Bourke 'had only pretended to be ignorant of English'; *Lady Nugent's journal*, pp 99, 169-75.

⁸⁷ Perhaps the merchant Jacques Rice Fitzgerald, originally from Co. Donegal, and who had settled in Léogane in southern St Domingue. He later moved to New Orleans; see Charles R. Maduall, *New Orleans marriage contracts, 1804-1820: Abstracted from the Notarial Archives of New Orleans* (New Orleans, 1977), p. 61; *Lady Nugent's journal*, pp 169-75.

against the French in the region, the number of Catholic Spanish residents increased on the island. With an increasing number of French prisoners and refugees in Jamaica, the demand for a Catholic priest began to increase. The Irish Franciscan priest Anthony Quigly arrived on the island in 1792 to administer the main duties around baptism, marriages and burials. There was no church building available and Quigly resided on West Street, close to the harbour. The Spanish and French presence is evident from the early burial records signed by Quigly.⁸⁸ These records also include a number of Irishmen, mostly from the disbanded French regiment which had been transferred to the island.⁸⁹ Yellow fever continued to decrease the number of French-Irish soldiers, judging by the records, underlining the impact of the death rate on the Irish presence on the island in this period.

As a priest, Quigly soon found that he was catering for a wide range of parishioners in the town. Besides people of European origin, he also performed the rites for a number of black Spanish residents in Kingston. Thus we find in October 1795 that 'John' had died of the smallpox in the house of a watchmaker, Robert Clarke. The latter appeared to be an important man in the Catholic community in the city as a number of the deaths were recorded as taking place in his house.⁹⁰ On 12 February 1796, a 'Hugo from the North of Ireland' passed away in the same place.⁹¹ A number of sailors from Ireland were also buried on the island, including John Harrington and John Mansby from the *Maria* under the captaincy of Michael Barry from Cork. In July and August of the same year, four members of the 3rd regiment of the Irish Brigade, namely lieutenant Darly Mahony, lieutenant John Falvy, the quartermaster Darly Falvy and William Sutton, an officer, were all recorded.⁹² On 2 May

⁸⁸ 'Burials (1795-99)', (EAP 148/2/1).

⁸⁹ Military personnel from the British army would generally have been buried at the garrison cemetery.

⁹⁰ He was the son of Robert Clarke, a gentleman from St Catherine, and a mulatto woman Charlotte Powlet, who had been given 'the same rights and privileges as Englishmen'; see 'Private acts, anno 15 georgii III 1774' in Alexander Aikman, *Laws of Jamaica, 1760-1792* (2 vols, Kingston, 1804) ii..

⁹¹ It is unclear from the documents where he had arrived from, perhaps a sailor.

⁹² Stationed at Fort Augusta, this regiment consisted of Irish recruits (some transferred from French regiments) who suffered a great loss to illness, see William Lemprière, *Practical observations on the diseases of the army in Jamaica* (Lyon, 1799), pp 33, 231.

1798 another Irish sailor, Patrick Smith from an American ship, was described as ‘a native of Fingall in Ireland’. These examples demonstrated the army links and the variety of Catholic Irish that the priest encountered.

Quigly died on the island in 1799 and was succeeded by the French priest Guillaume Le Cun. The Frenchman had arrived on the island via Haiti and referred to himself as a refugee in the records.⁹³ Quigly’s death signalled the beginning of a period from 1799 to 1805 where there were at least three competing Catholic churches on the island. One was led by the Spanish priest Basilio Suarez de Lema, who in 1805 married an Ansanto McYdemans of the 55th Regiment to Caroline (Catalina), described as ‘natives of Ireland’.⁹⁴ A third was led by the Abbé de l'Espinasse, a controversial figure who had founded a French-speaking second church.⁹⁵ The conflict between the two Frenchmen caused gaps in the archives for the period when the Irish regiments were on the island. The Spanish had petitioned the governor to be allowed their own church, while the French were engaged in their dispute. The Catholic Church in Jamaica mainly catered for the Spanish merchants and French refugees. There was evidence that Irish Catholics used both churches, especially for weddings and burials.⁹⁶ It appeared that the Irish preferred to attend the Spanish-speaking church during the conflict between Le Cun and Espinasse. The burial organised for Maria Plunkett, which featured the Spanish priest, illustrated this. It also indicated that those Catholics who could afford it purchased their own private plot to be laid to rest. This was a custom in the Jamaican countryside, where white settlers on the plantations were often interred on the property. In the urban areas there were designated cemeteries. As the records of Le Cun and Suarez de Lema generally speak of French and Spanish individuals, it must be concluded that the small

⁹³ ‘Baptisms, Marriages, Burials and Confirmations (1804-1807)’ (EAP 148/2/4).

⁹⁴ The Spanish priest appeared to have difficulty in noting the names of the couple down, the 55th was stationed on the island, however, and did include recruits from Ireland; see Stewart, *Account of Jamaica*, p. 26.

⁹⁵ Francis Osborne, *History of the Catholic Church in Jamaica* (Chicago, 1988), pp 161-65.

⁹⁶ Basilio Suarez de Lema recorded five marriages in the period 1805-07 (EAP 148/2/1).

number of Irish Catholics only occasionally made use of the newly established churches.⁹⁷

The Catholic Irish in Jamaica in the period around the Haitian Revolution presented a variety of colonial experiences dependent upon their origin and social status. Officers from France who had moved into the British army were treated as equals, while the ordinary Catholic Irish soldiers were treated with suspicion. The return of the Catholic Church to Jamaica in the 1790s led by Quigly illustrates the diversity of the Irish presence, while the move of the French-Irish soldiers to the British army highlights the mobility of the Catholic Irish.

IV Irish officers and civil government

As hostilities ended in both Europe and the Caribbean, the Protestant Irish that featured in the British army began to move from military posts to civilian government. In the aftermath of Nugent's tenure as governor, three Irish commanders held the same position in Jamaica in the first half of the nineteenth century. This case study will first consider Sir Eyre Coote, who replaced Nugent in 1808; secondly Henry Conran, who deputised for the duke of Manchester, when he was absent after suffering ill health. And thirdly, John Keane, who eventually replaced the duke in 1827. Like Nugent, all three combined their position of commander-in-chief while acting as governor. This case study will highlight how the Protestant Irish found the opportunity for a new career in civil government. They often retained a link with the army and functioned within the structures of Empire. The three men had different backgrounds and were at different stages of their career. The three case studies in this section illustrate the differences in their approach to having to transfer from military to civilian life. It also serves to further indicate the sojourn element of the army on the island, as their presence was further reduced during the 1820s.

A veteran of the American Revolutionary War, Sir Eyre Coote reluctantly succeeded Nugent. From the west of Ireland, Coote's family had strong connections with the British

⁹⁷ Between 1799 and 1804 only one burial was recorded by Espinasse, that of Mary Bary Henley, the wife of Georges Henley, who died in Nov. 1802 and who was from Cork.

army. However, he had less administrative experience, despite having held a seat in the Irish House of Commons previously, where he had opposed the Act of Union.⁹⁸ He had previously been in the West Indies, where he had seen service in the Leeward Islands.⁹⁹ Besides being commander in chief, Coote was created lieutenant governor until a new candidate was found, while his military command continued under whoever was appointed.¹⁰⁰ Like Nugent, he concentrated on his role of commander-in-chief of the island to ensure that the French threat was neutralised. Owing to the number of past conflicts in the region, Coote also placed a strong emphasis on the defence of the island. To ensure the co-operation of the local lawmakers, he had been given a brief to establish free ports on the island, which enabled the islanders to trade with the United States.¹⁰¹

After Nugent, Coote was the second governor who had links with the Irish military presence in Jamaica. After the departure of Nugent, the remnants of the 85th regiment remained, while Coote himself had arrived on the island in 1806 with the 18th, the Royal Irish Regiment, made up of two battalions.¹⁰² Illness continued to be an issue and yellow fever killed 52 officers and 1,777 soldiers in the twelve years of their service of the 18th, which saw combat only once, in Santo Domingo.¹⁰³ The regiment had been stationed in Ireland before sailing for the Caribbean and both battalions had a number of Irish officers. They included the captains Dennis O'Farrell, Charles O'Gorman and Thomas Bailie.¹⁰⁴ In 1808 a number of other regiments were stationed on the island, including the 54th, 55th, the 60th (two battalions) and the 85th. Coote surrounded himself with a large number of military men, including his aide-de-camp Thomas Walsh and Carmichael, making a total of nineteen

⁹⁸ David Fleming, 'The correspondence of Eyre Coote with his brother, Charles Henry Coote, and others on the Irish Act of Union, 1799-1800' in *Analecta Hibernica*, xl (2007), pp 189, 191-228.

⁹⁹ *A plain statement of facts relative to Sir Eyre Coote* (London, 1816), pp 34-36.

¹⁰⁰ John Philippart, *The royal military calendar, or army service and commission book* (5 vols, London, 1820) iv, p. 427.

¹⁰¹ *Journals of the House of Commons* (London, 1806) lx1, p. 838.

¹⁰² *Jamaica Almanac* (1808).

¹⁰³ G. Le Mesurier Gretton, *The campaigns and history of the Royal Irish Regiment from 1684 to 1902* (London, 1911), pp 117-19.

¹⁰⁴ *The New Annual Register* (1806) xlviii, p. 168.

senior staff. Carmichael at this stage was involved in preparing the assault on Santo Domingo.¹⁰⁵ Coote's period on the island was too short for him to establish any meaningful connections with the other Irish in Jamaica, as Nugent had done. He did, however, have to concern himself with the revolt of the West India Regiment as described above. As he had fulfilled his military orders, Coote and his young wife were keen to return to England.¹⁰⁶ His brief period as governor illustrated a successful move from the military to civil government. As governor, he retained the military structures with which he was familiar, and did not engage with the Irish presence in Jamaica in a similar way as Nugent had.¹⁰⁷ Coote did not pursue any further positions in colonial government.

Coote left the position to William Montagu, duke of Manchester, who became the longest sitting governor on the island in the pre-abolition period.¹⁰⁸ Like Carmichael, the Protestant Irishman Henry Conran was a seasoned soldier, who had seen combat in a number of colonial theatres of war, including India.¹⁰⁹ His younger brother James Samuel Conran served as captain in the 17th Light Dragoons, while his father had served during the American Revolutionary War.¹¹⁰ Henry Conran had been stationed in the Caribbean in 1804, when he was a lieutenant colonel of the 96th regiment of foot.¹¹¹ In 1807 Conran rejoined his father in India and was promoted to major general in 1812. In 1816, he was appointed as commander-in-chief of the army in Jamaica.¹¹² Like Coote previously, this was in combination with the position of lieutenant governor. As the duke of Manchester remained in his post, Conran deputised for him for the eight years when Manchester was absent. This

¹⁰⁵ *Jamaica Almanac* (1808).

¹⁰⁶ Stanley D. M. Carpenter, 'Coote, Eyre (bap. 1759, d. 1823)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/6244>) (8 Apr. 2014).

¹⁰⁷ As a consequence of his stay in the Caribbean, Coote began to experience mental health issues and was eventually dismissed from the army.

¹⁰⁸ G. Le G. Norgate, 'Montagu, William, fifth duke of Manchester (1771-1843)', rev. Lynn Milne, *Ibid.*, (<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/19036>) (4 Apr. 2014).

¹⁰⁹ *The United Service Magazine* (1829) ii, p. 263.

¹¹⁰ Bernard Burke (ed.), *The general armory of England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales* (London, 1884), p. xcvi; *The Bengal obituary booklet* (Calcutta, 1851) p. 152.

¹¹¹ *The United Service Magazine* (1829) ii, p. 263.

¹¹² *Jamaica Almanac* (1817).

happened frequently during the 1820s, when the duke suffered ill health after a fall and Conran spent most of his time dealing with government issues.¹¹³

As hostilities in the region had ended, the military presence was scaled down and Conran concentrated on maintaining the regiments on the island. He held four under his command in 1817, the 58th, 60th, 61st and York Chasseurs.¹¹⁴ He also was the most senior officer, with responsibility over the troops on the Bahamas and the 2nd and 5th West India Regiments in Jamaica. Like his predecessors, Henry Conran included a number of Irish officers among his staff, including Daniel O'Meara.¹¹⁵ O'Meara had served with largely Afro-Caribbean troops since the 1790s, mostly in the Windward Islands of St Lucia and Grenada. He was stationed on St Lucia with the Guadeloupe Rangers, which was later amalgamated into the 12th West India Regiment. In 1797, O'Meara was promoted to lieutenant colonel of the same regiment, until he was appointed a member of staff in Jamaica in 1810.¹¹⁶ It also included a Captain Charles Vallancey Jr, the son of General Charles Vallancey, who was an English-born engineer who had spent most of his time in Ireland. Of Huguenot origins, he had married into a Dublin family of similar origins.¹¹⁷ The 58th had sailed from Cork to Jamaica in 1816 and also contained a number of Irish officers. Conran spent much of the first half of the 1820s with civilian tasks until he was given command of the 98th and left Jamaica in 1824. Conran's career and sustained presence in Jamaica underlined the opportunities that were available to the Protestant Irish who had risen through the ranks in the army. As lieutenant governor Conran spent a considerable amount of time in the 1820s dealing with local political issues as opposed to military ones. His link with India

¹¹³ *JAJ*, xiii, 562-67.

¹¹⁴ *Jamaica almanac* (1817).

¹¹⁵ *JAJ*, xiii, 13; *Jamaica almanac* (1817).

¹¹⁶ John Phillippart, *The royal military calendar: containing the services of every general officer in the British Army* (2 vols, 1st ed., London, 1815) i, p. 322.

¹¹⁷ Charles Vallancey to George McCartney, 1777 (PRONI, D572/2/509).

also illustrated the wider engagement within the structures of Empire and an ability to move between the two jurisdictions with ease.

After Conran had returned to Europe, the authorities appointed Sir John Keane, a former commander of the 60th regiment of foot, as the lieutenant governor.¹¹⁸ Originally from Belmont, Co. Waterford, he came from a family with a military background. Keane had a distinguished career in the army and was involved in the 1809 invasion of Martinique.¹¹⁹ He had served under the duke of Wellington, a connection that in likelihood brought him the Jamaica command.¹²⁰ Like Conran, Keane also served as lieutenant governor under Manchester, who remained in bad health and asked the London authorities to recall him. In 1827, he succeeded Montagu, who left for England. Keane also combined his command with leading the civil government for almost two years, until a replacement governor was appointed.¹²¹ His staff included Stephen Noel of the 92nd regiment that had been on the island since 1817.¹²² Noel had been in the Caribbean since 1796 and fought against the French in St Domingue and St Lucia.¹²³ Others included Daniel Kearney, Sylvester O'Halloran and Colonel Charles Gore (son of the earl of Arran).¹²⁴ The 33rd, 50th, 77th, 91st, and 92nd were quartered on Jamaica the year that Keane was appointed. The 92nd included the troops stationed on the Bahamas and British Honduras. In comparison to Conran's tenure there were fewer Irish among those listed as officers in the regiments.¹²⁵

¹¹⁸ Steve Brown, 'British regiments and the men who led them 1793-1815: 60th Regiment of Foot', in *Military subjects: organization, strategy and tactics* (2013) (http://www.napoleon-series.org/military/organization/Britain/Infantry/Regiments/c_60thFoot.html) (7 Apr. 2014).

¹¹⁹ John Phillippart, *The royal military calendar: containing the services of every general officer in the British Army* (5 vols, 3rd ed., London, 1820) iii, p. 376.

¹²⁰ H. M. Chichester, 'Keane, John, first Baron Keane (1781-1844)', rev. James Lunt, in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/15207>) (11 Apr. 2014).

¹²¹ *The Annual Register* (London, 1829), pp 386-97.

¹²² *Dublin Literary Gazette* (1830), p. 368.

¹²³ Henry G. Hart, *Annual army list, militia list, and imperial yeomanry list* (London, 1840), p. 244.

¹²⁴ *Jamaica Almanac* (1823); John W. Spurr, 'Gore, Sir Charles Stephen,' in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* (Toronto, 2003) ix (http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/gore_charles_stephen_9E.html) (3 Dec. 2015).

¹²⁵ *Jamaica Almanac* (1823).

Keane essentially remained a military man and resided in Kingston as opposed to Spanish Town for most of the time that he was on the island. While Nugent had been fully engaged in the complex political developments of the time, Keane preferred the company of his fellow officers.¹²⁶ He was given a number of suggestions on amelioration on the position of the enslaved from George Murray, the Secretary of War and the Colonies in London. However, he was opposed by the planters in the assembly and did not pursue the matter.¹²⁷ In 1830 he was promoted and deployed in India.¹²⁸ His role in Jamaica had been limited and Keane largely focussed on the military issues that concerned the increased piracy and the campaign of the bay of Honduras.¹²⁹

Upon his return to England, in May 1832 Keane was called to appear in front of a select committee of the House of Lords that investigated West Indian affairs.¹³⁰ During his testimony, Keane supported the institution of slavery in Jamaica. To illustrate his opposition to emancipation, he cited a visit of Ralph Woodford, the governor of Trinidad, who also opposed emancipation at the time. He took Woodford to Golden Grove, where both men were impressed by ‘the beautiful negro houses on Mr Arcedeckne’s property’.¹³¹ He also made a comparison with his country of birth, stating that ‘I have seen more misery in Ireland in one day, than I have seen in the West Indies during my [eight years] of service there’.¹³² Keane reflected on the poverty in Ireland that had become more visible at the time, while Maria Nugent had made a similar comparison during her stay in Jamaica.¹³³ That he displayed pro-slavery views and failed to implement amelioration policy indicated that Keane supported the

¹²⁶ ‘Evidence of the Hon. Charles Fleming’ in *Report from select committee on the extinction of slavery* (London, 1833), pp 206-207.

¹²⁷ This was in relation to Sunday being a day off for the enslaved and the use of provision grounds; see Thomas Clarkson, *A letter to the friends of the slaves on the new order of council* (London, 1830), pp 10-11; *The Christian Observer* (1830), p. 70.

¹²⁸ *Gentleman’s Magazine* (Oct., 1844), pp 426-428

¹²⁹ Chichester, ‘Keane, John, first Baron’ in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

¹³⁰ *Abstract of the report of the Lords Committees on the condition and treatment of the colonial slaves* (London, 1833), pp 29-33.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*

¹³² *Ibid.*

¹³³ *Lady Nugent’s journal*, p. 53; Thomas Bartlett, *Ireland: a history* (Dublin, 2010), p. 272.

white elite in Jamaica. His career illustrated the use of wider imperial links by using his military links to obtain a position in Jamaica. All three men engaged with the local assembly and acted as the executive power in a civil capacity. Neither Keane nor Conran had received a title by this stage in their career, which made them unlikely candidates for the full position of governor.¹³⁴ The move of the Protestant Irish officers into a civil position indicates a degree of mobility and an interest in a colonial career. They used the imperial structures to find opportunities and did so in Jamaica and elsewhere in the Caribbean. This is underlined by the experience of Carmichael, who became governor of Demerara, where he died in 1813.¹³⁵

The case studies in the chapter illustrate the Irish military presence during and after the Haitian Revolution. The short period that the Protestant Irish Nugent family resided in Jamaica highlights the importance of military connections, social relationships with the civilian Irish on the island and the wider connections with Ireland. Hugh Lyle Carmichael, who had Dissenter origins, was closely associated with the West India Regiment. His military career in the Caribbean illustrates the level of mobility of the Irish, while he obtained a command. His period in Jamaica was marked by the Fort Augusta revolt, where the enslaved of his regiment rebelled against their Irish officers. The health hazards of the Caribbean affected the regular Catholic Irish soldiers in Jamaica as disease resulted in a high death rate. The mobility of the Catholic Irish is illustrated in the records of the re-established Catholic Church in Kingston, which featured those who had seen service in the French army and had transferred to Jamaica. In the aftermath of the military campaign, the Protestant Irish officers used the structures of Empire to move into positions of civil government. They continued to retain their military connections, as was evident from the Irish army personnel that supported them. By the 1830s the threat of an enslaved uprising in Jamaica that replicated the events in

¹³⁴ He received a peerage in 1839 after in India.

¹³⁵ 'Carmichael vs. Carmichael, 22 April 1845' in John A. Dunlap, *Reports of cases decided in the high court of chancery* (New York, 1853) xxxv, pp 1-3.

Haiti had subsided. Instead, as John Keane's case study highlights, the discussions around slavery had become an important feature, as the next chapter will explore.

9 *The Irish in Jamaica and slavery*

This chapter will explore how the Protestant, Catholic and Dissenter Irish in Jamaica engaged with the struggle over slave emancipation during the period between 1823 and 1836. It will focus on the relationship with the institution of slavery, the colonial experiences of the Irish and how they featured within the white settler society. The case studies presented below will survey the Irish presence in the period leading up to the abolition of slavery on 1 August 1834 and the apprenticeship period that followed. The latter required the former enslaved to work for their former masters for three-quarters of their time. For the last quarter, they could demand a wage. Thus forced labour remained at the core of the apprenticeship system.¹ The Irish peer and governor the marquess of Sligo oversaw its implementation in Jamaica. The apprenticeship system attracted much controversy and was abandoned in August 1838, when the former enslaved were declared entirely free.² The Protestant Irish, such as Sligo, continued to feature in civil government, where they were joined by a number of Catholic Irish. Irish abolitionists such as Richard Robert Madden and Hope Masterton Waddell sojourned on the island in this period. This poses further questions about the identity of the Protestant, Catholic and Dissenter Irish and how they featured in the context of white unity. These aspects will be illustrated in the three case studies presented in this chapter.

The first case study analyses the experiences of Benjamin McMahon, illustrating the period leading up to the abolition of slavery. A former soldier, he moved to Jamaica in search of employment. He later published an account of his experiences in *Jamaican plantership* (London, 1839) in support of the abolitionist movement. His experience as one of the poor whites is contrasted with the second-generation Irishman Charles O'Connor. The second section in this chapter discusses the period of the marquess of Sligo as governor and is

¹ Thomas C. Holt, *The problem of freedom: race, labor, and politics in Jamaica and Britain, 1832-1938* (London, 1992), pp 57-58.

² Christer Petley, *Slaveholders in Jamaica: colonial society and culture during the era of abolition* (London, 2009), pp 147-58.

contrasted with his Irish predecessor the earl of Belmore, who supported the planters during the Baptist War (1831-32).³ During this period, the Irish-born magistrate, attorney and assembly member Hamilton Brown featured in local politics. Sligo's own family had historical connections with Jamaica and he owned two plantations on the island. The third section will focus on the sojourning Richard Robert Madden, who spent a year on the island as a special magistrate during the period of apprenticeship. Madden and his wife socialised with the Irish deputy marshal Samuel Geoghegan, who had permanently settled on the island. The case studies will illustrate how the Irish featured in different echelons of the white settler society in the period of abolition.

I McMahon

Benjamin McMahon resided in Jamaica as a bookkeeper and overseer during the 1820s and 1830s. His experiences at the lower echelons of white settler society illustrated the Irish presence in the plantation economy and their relationship with the institution of slavery in the early nineteenth century. McMahon moved regularly between properties, with the intention to improve his position from bookkeeper to overseer. He described his connections with the other white settlers and the enslaved throughout his period on the island. It laid bare the complexities around the issue of white settler unity in a society where race and social position were inextricably linked.⁴ McMahon had a number of encounters with the other Irish on the island, although he did not actively seek them out. His experiences will be contrasted with that of a second-generation Irishman, Charles O'Connor, a local magistrate who supported slavery.

The narrative begins when McMahon joined the revolutionary army in Latin America. Aside from noting that Ireland was his native country, he said nothing about his early life or

³ Ibid., 109-112.

⁴ Trevor Burnard and John Garrigus, *The plantation machine: Atlantic capitalism in French Saint-Domingue and British Jamaica* (Philadelphia, 2016), p. 18.

family background.⁵ In July 1818 McMahon boarded a ship in Dublin and landed on the island of Margarita (present-day Venezuela), where he joined Simon Bolivar's army.⁶ In the early nineteenth century, the liberation movements in Latin America attracted a number of Irish soldiers to the region, who became involved in the war against the Spanish.⁷ McMahon spent the rest of the year training the revolutionary troops, before engaging in combat on the mainland the following year.⁸ He left Latin America in 1819 and moved to Jamaica to seek out employment.

In the eyes of the plantation owners and their agents, the experienced soldier must have appeared as a suitable candidate, able to withstand the health hazards of the Jamaican countryside. When McMahon arrived on the island in the summer of 1819, he was introduced to the first Irish in Jamaica. The brothers Ulysses and Milo Bourke had a pharmacy on Duke Street in Kingston, where he arrived looking for work.⁹ This event illustrated how McMahon was able to use the Irish presence on the island to obtain a position. It had similarities with the social structures of the Scottish network on the island, where local connections assisted the new arrivals.¹⁰ The Bourke brothers suggested a position up in the mountains east of Kingston.¹¹ The Bloxburgh estate, owned by Thomas P. Kellerman, was a large operation, with 220 enslaved.¹² In the following eighteen years McMahon worked at twenty-four

⁵ There is no indication that he had links with the prominent McMahon family from Limerick, which included Sir William McMahon (1776-1837); however, from the language used in *Jamaican plantership*, where he referred to ministers of the gospel, church or chapel and the Sabbath, it can be concluded that he was Protestant; see Benjamin McMahon, *Jamaican plantership* (London, 1839), pp 211-12.

⁶ An island off the coast of present-day Venezuela and a major rebel stronghold in this period; see Stephen K. Stoa, 'Pablo Morillo, the war and the Riego revolt' in Christon I. Archer (ed.), *The wars of independence in Spanish America* (Wilmington, 2000), pp 213-33.

⁷ Peadar Kirby, *Ireland and Latin America: links and lessons* (Dublin, 1992), pp 98-100.

⁸ In 1819 he participated in a number of campaigns on the mainland; see McMahon, *Jamaican plantership*, pp 11-13.

⁹ The brothers both died in 1826; see John Haggard (ed.), *Reports of cases argued and determined in the Ecclesiastical Courts at Canterbury* (London, 1829), pp 222-37.

¹⁰ Douglas Hamilton, *Scotland, the Caribbean and the Atlantic world, 1750-1820* (Manchester, 2005), pp 2-7, 87.

¹¹ McMahon, *Jamaican plantership*, p. 17.

¹² 'Return of proprietors for the parish of Port Royal (mountain district)' in *Jamaica Almanac* (1818); 'Return of givings-in for the parish of Port Royal (mountain district)' in idem (1823); 'Jamaica Port Royal 51 (Bloxburgh)' (UCL website).

different properties around Jamaica, first as a bookkeeper and later as an overseer.¹³ Initially, he found it difficult to improve his position. Unemployment was always a threat, and McMahon had to follow the overseer's orders or he 'would have to walk the country as a vagrant, and become a nuisance to my colour'.¹⁴ After the introduction to the institution of slavery at the Bloxburgh plantation, it became an integral part of McMahon's life until it was abolished in 1834 and replaced by the apprenticeship system.

McMahon experienced the complexities of the race-defined society during a period of unemployment. When he moved to Palm estate in the parish of St Thomas in the Vale,¹⁵ one of his colleagues found a letter that McMahon was writing to his brother, where he criticised the brutality of slave punishments. He discovered that his views on the treatment of the enslaved spread quickly among whites and soon found himself out of work. McMahon was forced to live 'amongst [free] people of colour, by whom I was much respected', although he did not elaborate on the reasons for this respect.¹⁶ However, his actions showed that he had stepped outside of his own community, which was perceived as undermining the white settler unity. McMahon described how the other Europeans shunned him while he lived among the free coloured, highlighting the difficulties around white settler unity.¹⁷ Out of favour, McMahon took any job he could find and managed to gradually improve his situation in the second half of the decade. During the 1820s, he restricted himself largely to the central part of the island, between St Andrew and St Ann, and developed informal connections there.

The poor whites constantly sought to improve themselves and regularly moved between plantations.¹⁸ McMahon received a letter of commendation for a job at the Worthy

¹³ McMahon, *Jamaican plantership*, p. 1.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 22.

¹⁵ 'Jamaica St Thomas-in-the-Vale 23 (Palm Estate)', (UCL website). McMahon does not provide a date for when he started his employment at the Palm estate, but this must have been between Oct. 1821, when he was at the Charleton estate, and July 1822, when he became an overseer on the Crawle estate; see *ibid.*, 24-45.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 45-46.

¹⁷ David Lambert, *White Creole culture, politics and identity during the age of abolition* (Cambridge, 2005), p. 75.

¹⁸ Petley, *Slaveholders*, p. 24.

Park plantation, where he was employed for two weeks.¹⁹ He was offered the position of overseer at Ardock Pen, St Ann, owned by David Finlay, who had registered 200 cattle and 86 enslaved.²⁰ Four years after arriving on the island, McMahon could now be more selective in his choices, indicating that despite the initial obstacles, he managed to improve himself.²¹ After a spell at Amity Hall, St Ann and Russell Hall, St Mary, McMahon moved to the Cherry Garden estate in the parish of St Dorothy, where he would spent eighteen months as head bookkeeper.²² There, he was told that the Scottish overseer Francis McCook ‘had cast reflections on my country men, from which I supposed I should stand no chance of promotion’.²³ McMahon continued to move between properties around the central part of the island until an illness brought him back to Kingston after 1827.²⁴ From there he relocated to the Passley Garden estate in the parish of Portland, owned by the lawyer John Sutton Minot.²⁵ This was his only, brief spell on the Western side of the island during the 1820s and he returned to Stirling Castle plantation as the overseer in January 1830.²⁶ McMahon’s first ten years on the island illustrated the complexities around white unity. His contact with the free coloured restricted the opportunities available to him, while the incident with Francis McCook at Cherry Garden indicated that at least on one occasion, McMahon’s Irish origin prevented him from obtaining a better position.

McMahon encountered a number of fellow Irishmen that had obtained different degrees of prosperity. Like the Bourke brothers who assisted him at the beginning, McMahon

¹⁹ McMahon, *Jamaican plantership*, pp 59-63.

²⁰ Finlay had died by 1837 and compensation was given to the Stirling brothers amounting to £1717.18s.4d. for 97 enslaved; see ‘Returns of properties for the parish of St Ann’ *Jamaica almanac* (1826); ‘Jamaica St Ann 153’ (UCL database).

²¹ McMahon, *Jamaica plantership*, p. 64.

²² *Ibid.*, 67-71.

²³ He noted that he was at the Osborne estate in Aug. 1827 and subsequently worked at two other plantations in St Mary and St George before retiring; see *ibid.*, 69-79.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 73.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 78-79.

²⁶ McMahon had first been employed at Stirling Castle in 1821, after he left the Bloxburgh estate; see *ibid.*, 30, 80.

did not identify his fellow countrymen.²⁷ After leaving Bloxburgh, he met a Mr French who ‘procured’ him a position on the Stirling Castle estate in St Thomas in the Vale.²⁸ This was in all likelihood the surveyor Francis John French, who was listed as the owner of Liffy Side in the same parish. A relation of his, Peter French, owned French Park in the same parish, although both properties appeared to be too small to be described as a plantation.²⁹ As surveying was a lucrative business in this period, Liffy Side was probably the French family home.³⁰ McMahon continued to work on plantations, where the owners appeared to be largely absent. French, who organised his first employment at Stirling Castle, in all likelihood organised the other positions for McMahon in the parish of St Thomas in the Vale.³¹ It indicated that having local Irish connections provided employment opportunities for McMahon. After he had spent eighteen months at Cherry Garden, ‘an old Irishman named Kelly’ employed him on the Exeter estate in the parish of Vere. McMahon explained that Kelly had left Jamaica after making his fortune, but had been forced to return after he had ‘entirely lost it in speculation’. Seventeen years after leaving the island he had been ‘forced to return’.³² Besides working as an overseer, Kelly also organised the move of ‘poor Irish bookkeepers and tradesmen’ to the island. He made sure that he was the executor of their wills and out of twenty-one Irish migrants brought over by Kelly, eighteen had passed away. According to McMahon, Kelly made his fortune by ‘becoming an executor on a large

²⁷ For the others there did not appear to be a need to identify them as such, as for instance with a Mr Farrell and Mr Cowan in the parish of St Mary, which could refer to the Rev. John Cowan and John Farrell; see ‘Ecclesiastical establishment’ *Jamaica almanac* (1839); ‘Returns for givings-in’ St Mary in *idem* (1833); McMahon, *Jamaica plantership*, p. 200.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 30.

²⁹ French was not connected to the French family who owned property in the Manchester parish. Liffy Side was listed as Cragie Mount in 1820 with three enslaved, while Peter French owned around ten. Neither claimed compensation and by 1825, only French Park remained listed. See ‘Returns of givings-in for the parish of St Thomas in the Vale’ in *Jamaica almanac* (1820); *idem* (1824); *idem* (1825); *idem* (1828).

³⁰ Barry W. Higman, *Jamaica surveyed: plantation maps and plans of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries* (Kingston, 2001), pp 19-26.

³¹ Stirling Castle, Charleton and the Palm estate were all in the same parish; see McMahon, *Jamaica plantership*, pp 35-46.

³² *Ibid.*, 71.

scale'.³³ It indicates that when the poor Irish arrived on the island they received a degree of support from their fellow countrymen. McMahon's encounters also illustrated that the poor Irish used informal connections to obtain positions.

The second generation of Irish that featured on the island experienced similar issues around white settler unity, especially during the abolitionist period. In 1830 McMahon moved towards the Western side of the island, into the parish of Trelawny, where he was employed on the Manchester and Hopewell estates.³⁴ One of the planters with Irish connections on this part of the island was Richard O'Connor, who owned the Carrick Foyle estate. His father Philip had been a lieutenant in the 87th regiment, which had disbanded in 1763. Through his Scottish connections in the army, Philip ventured out to Jamaica.³⁵ In 1766 Philip married Sussanah Lawrence, the daughter of James Lawrence, owner of the Fairfield plantation in Westmoreland.³⁶ In 1776, Philip was listed as the owner of the Carrick Foyle plantation in the parish of Trelawny, where he was also a magistrate.³⁷ His daughter Mary J. O'Connor married into the Irving family from the parish of St James. Richard inherited the Carrick Foyle plantation, while his brother Charles moved to Westmoreland, where his mother had been born.³⁸ In 1811 Charles was listed as the owner of the Fernbrook estate, with 130 enslaved.³⁹ However, five years later he suffered some financial hardship, as the plantation was in the hands of the merchants Hibbert, Taylors and Simpson, who sold it on.⁴⁰ Charles O'Connor was listed as the owner of 26 enslaved in 1823 and worked as an attorney for

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid., 82.

³⁵ The 87th 'Keith's Highlanders' were disbanded in 1763 after four years of active service. It was not unusual for Irish officers to serve in these regiments; see John S. Farmer, *The regimental records of the British army* (London, 1901), pp 202-03; Victoria Henshaw, *Scotland and the British army, 1700-1750: defending the union* (London, 2014), pp 34-42.

³⁶ 'Hanover Parish Register, 1725-1825' (IRO, B0054, f. 27); Vere Langford Oliver, *Caribbeana* (6 vols, London, 1919) vi, pp 123-24.

³⁷ Carrickfoyle was a fortification in Co. Wexford; see 'Estates in Trelawny, with names of proprietors in 1776 and after' in *Jamaica almanac* (1839); 'List of magistrates for the parish of Trelawny' in idem (1776); James Robertson, 'A plan of the Carrick-Foyle estate' (1793), reproduced in Higman, *Jamaica surveyed*, p. 36.

³⁸ Listed as a Captain; see 'Militia list, Western interior regiment' in *Jamaica almanac* (1808).

³⁹ 'Return of givings-in for the parish of Westmoreland' in *Jamaica almanac* (1811).

⁴⁰ 'Return of proprietors' in *Jamaica Almanac* (1816).

absentee landowners.⁴¹ He managed to increase the number of enslaved to almost double in three years, when he eventually purchased the Charlemont property in Westmoreland.⁴² As second-generation Irish settlers on the island, Richard, Mary and Charles O'Connor had fully integrated into the white planter society. Their colonial experiences centred on race and wealth as opposed to religious affiliation and the structures of Empire. While McMahon was confronted with his Irish origins, there was no suggestion that the O'Connors experienced similar obstacles. And their degree of wealth meant that they did not have direct connections with the free coloured or enslaved the way that McMahon experienced.

The difference between the first and second-generation Irish during the period of abolition can be illustrated by the involvement of McMahon and Charles O'Conner in the Baptist War.⁴³ Like his father, Charles became a magistrate in 1817, which indicated that despite losing Fernbrook, he still was a freeholder, as this was a requirement for the position. In December 1831, as the Baptist War erupted on the Western side of the island, martial law was declared. McMahon, who was a member of the Trelawny militia, was called up to serve in the suppression of the uprising.⁴⁴ His involvement was limited to guarding a number of plantations and a number of skirmishes.⁴⁵ This was in contrast to Charles O'Connor, who on the 8 February 1832 was part of the militia that demolished the Baptist Church in Montego Bay.⁴⁶ He also was involved in the prosecution of Emily McLennan, who was suspected of being a supporter to the Baptist preacher Thomas Burchell.⁴⁷ Despite his involvement and the

⁴¹ He was referred to in 1835 as 'Mr O'Connor who has the management of several estates in the neighbourhood', while his grave in Montego Bay includes a tablet from his fellow planters that reads 'in testimony of his many virtues and of their sense of his services in the management of their estates during a period of unparalleled difficulty'; see James Henry Lawrence-Archer, *Monumental inscriptions of the British West Indies* (London, 1875), p. 319; 'Letter from Walter Finlayson SJ to Sligo; 29 December 1835' in *Accounts and papers* (14 vols, London, 1836) xii, p. 176.

⁴² 'Return for givings-in' in *Jamaica almanac* (1823); idem (1827).

⁴³ For details on the Baptist War, see section ii below.

⁴⁴ McMahon, *Jamaica plantership*, pp 88-89.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 90-109.

⁴⁶ *A narrative of recent events connected with the Baptist mission* (Kingston, 1833), pp 115-16.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 139.

investigations that followed, O'Connor retained his position and returned to his plantation, where he died in 1838, aged sixty-eight.⁴⁸

The colonial experiences of Benjamin McMahon illustrated the links between the poor whites, the enslaved and the free coloured. His attitude undermined white unity and obstructed his social progress in a society determined by wealth and race. The Irish links of McMahon revealed that social connections remained important, especially in obtaining employment. On one occasion, he found that his nationality obstructed him in gaining a promotion. His links with Francis French and Kelly demonstrated that there were opportunities for the Irish, despite the obstacles that McMahon had experienced. The actions of Charles O'Connor illustrated how the second-generation Irish managed to become part of the white settler community, distance themselves from the poor whites and attain public office.

McMahon left the island and travelled to London in 1838 to publish his writings, both to argue against the apprenticeship system and to relate his experiences of the plantation system.⁴⁹ The background to McMahon's support for the abolitionists, despite his work as an overseer and bookkeeper, can perhaps be found in his private life. After finishing his militia duty in 1830, McMahon returned to the Hope estate in Trelawny, which he referred to as 'home'.⁵⁰ There is evidence in the baptism records of the parish that he fathered two daughters, Eliza (1834) and Isabella (1836), with Juliana McDonald.⁵¹ She was in all likelihood a free woman of colour and was listed as owning five enslaved and three livestock in 1831.⁵² After the Baptist War, McMahon increasingly began to support the presence of the

⁴⁸ In 1836 he claimed compensation for the Charleymount Settlement, receiving £651 4s.0d. for thirty-six enslaved. He also received compensation for the Retirement Estate in Westmoreland as the guardian for the Reid family that amounted to £613.18s.1 d. for thirty-one enslaved; see 'Jamaica Westmoreland 682 (Charleymount Settlement)'; 'Jamaica Westmoreland 681' (Retirement) (UCL Database); Archer, *Monumental inscriptions*, p. 319.

⁴⁹ McMahon, *Jamaican plantership*, pp 127-29.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 101.

⁵¹ *Trelawny parish baptism index (1771-1870)*, p. 451.

⁵² 'Return for givings-in' in *Jamaica almanac* (1832).

preachers proselytising to the enslaved, which caused a degree of unrest among his white employers. He briefly branched out into a business of his own but that 'sunk in speculation'.⁵³ He returned to work as an overseer, bookkeeper and eventually an attorney at the Flower Hill estate in St James, before he left the island.⁵⁴ McMahon did not mention his family, who continued to live in Trelawny, while Juliana claimed compensation for nine enslaved in 1835.⁵⁵

In his book, McMahon highlighted the abuses that occurred in Jamaica, relating his experiences as an overseer and bookkeeper in the first half of the nineteenth century. His approach was both unusual and deliberate, as McMahon named all the individuals he had encountered in his publication. The book was published by Effingham Wilson, who was a noted radical and advocate for free speech based in London.⁵⁶ In the preface, McMahon set out his motives, which read like a manifesto of the abolitionist movement.⁵⁷ He was acutely aware that his approach was going to make him many enemies, although he did intend to return to the island.⁵⁸ Despite mentioning a large number of individuals, there were no reported cases of libel against him entered into the records. McMahon wrote with a specific audience in mind and his own recollections served that purpose. It should be noted that he mainly described the actions of others towards the enslaved and did not elaborate on any of the punishment regimes he had been involved in himself. With this in mind, his description of the white settlers should be placed with the abolitionist perspective. Similarly, their reaction to McMahon's links with the enslaved and free coloured should be viewed in the context of white unity. It can be argued that the purpose of the book was superseded by events in

⁵³ McMahon, *Jamaica plantership*, p. 109.

⁵⁴ In 1836 the owners received £5586 9s.4d. for 285 enslaved; 'Jamaica St James 544' (Flower Hill), UCL database).

⁵⁵ She received £175 17s.8 d. for nine enslaved; 'Jamaica Trelawney 47', (UCL database). Some free coloured people supported the compensation scheme; see Kathleen Mary Butler, *The economics of emancipation: Jamaica and Barbados, 1823-1843* (Chapel Hill, 1995), p. 11.

⁵⁶ Laurence Worms, 'Wilson, Effingham (1785-1868)' in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004 (<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/38136>) (9 Dec. 2016).

⁵⁷ McMahon, *Jamaican plantership*, pp i-viii.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 299.

Jamaica, where the apprenticeship ended in August 1838, while his *Jamaica plantership* was not published until December of that year.

In his preface McMahon noted that ‘never can the resources of the British West Indian colonies be fairly brought out, until the whole race of the planters are superseded by a new one’.⁵⁹ He addressed this in the second part of the book, where he outlined the structures of the white settler society around the aspects of wealth and race. His perspective on poor whites related how new arrivals found destitution when they lacked the social connections to find better positions. He mentioned, for instance, seven English migrants who worked for Hamilton Brown in 1836 under an indenture. They complained about their treatment but were incarcerated for desertion and eventually sentenced to five weeks of hard labour.⁶⁰ Although a fellow Irishman, McMahon did not mention Brown’s origins. And while his nationality had been a hindrance once, it did not feature in the narrative of the 1830s.⁶¹ While the aim of *Jamaican plantership* was to highlight the mistreatment of the enslaved, the book also illustrates how the poor Irish used local informal connections, became engaged with the institution of slavery and featured in white settler society. The McMahon case study illustrates the complex issues around white unity where the social spheres of the free coloured and white settler overlap.

II *Sligo*

As the previous chapter outlined, the Protestant Irish featured in the colonial administration of Jamaica during the first half of the nineteenth century and this section will illustrate their involvement during the period of abolition. They included the Irish peer Somerset Lowry-Corry, second earl of Belmore, who served as governor from 1829 to 1832 and the marquess of Sligo, who was governor from 1834 to 1836. Both men were sojourners on the island and obtained the appointments through their connections in London. The case studies presented

⁵⁹ Ibid., i-viii.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 267-73.

⁶¹ Ibid., 268.

below will consider the governor presence in the context of the white settler society and also feature the aforementioned Hamilton Brown and the barrister Fitzherbert Batty. Their presence was notable during the period of the abolition of slavery and the apprenticeship system implemented in 1834.⁶² Brown owned four plantations and was a member of the Colonial Church Union, which opposed the abolitionists and missionaries in particular.⁶³ In the case of Sligo, the ownership of two plantations in Jamaica linked his family to slavery. The Irish-born Batty, who assisted Belmore as the acting attorney general, owned a plantation in St Mary.⁶⁴ This section will illustrate the involvement of the Protestant Irish in Jamaica both in the structures of civil government on the island and the events surrounding the abolition of slavery.

Following the departure of John Keane, the earl of Belmore was appointed governor of Jamaica in November 1828. Upon meeting him before he departed, the political diarist Charles Greville found Belmore ‘very civil’, although not ‘bright’.⁶⁵ Unlike his military predecessors, Belmore did not appear to count any fellow Irish among his staff. He had no other significant administrative experience except that of his estate, Castle Coole, Co. Fermanagh. He had served as an M.P. for County Tyrone (1798-1802), where he refused to support Catholic emancipation and sided firmly with the Tory party.⁶⁶ Belmore used his metropolitan connections, especially those with the Duke of Wellington, to obtain his position and the substantial salary that was attached to it.⁶⁷ And while he appeared keen to

⁶² Gad Heuman, *The Caribbean: a brief history* (London, 2014), pp 105-06.

⁶³ Kathleen M. Butler, *The economics of emancipation: Jamaica and Barbados, 1823-1843* (London, 1995), p. 76; Abigail B. Bakan, *Ideology and class conflict in Jamaica: the politics of rebellion* (Montreal, 1990), pp 66-67.

⁶⁴ ‘Return for givings-in’ in *Jamaica almanac* (1832).

⁶⁵ *The Greville memoirs: a journal of the reigns of King George IV, King William IV and Queen Victoria* ed. Henry Reeve (2 vols, Cambridge, 2011) i, p. 150.

⁶⁶ He also sat in the House of Lords after the death of his father; see Somerset Richard Lowry Corry (earl of Belmore), *The history of the two Ulster manors* (Dublin, 1881), p. 283.

⁶⁷ Peter Marson, *Belmore: The Lowry Corrys of Castle Coole, 1646-1913* (Belfast, 2007), pp 173-74.

enter imperial service, Belmore did not show a great understanding of colonial affairs or the issues around slavery when he departed.⁶⁸ Belmore arrived on the island in February 1829.

Several controversial events occurred during Belmore's time as governor, including the Baptist War of 1831 and the case of the enslaved woman Kitty Hylton. In 1829, she had been beaten by the Rev. George W. Bridges, the noted anti-abolitionist rector in St Ann.⁶⁹ The case became of interest to Thomas Pringle, the chair of the Anti-Slavery Society in London, who informed the secretary of state, Sir George Murray.⁷⁰ In December 1829 Murray ordered Belmore – who confessed that he had not been aware of the controversy – to investigate. Belmore refused to reopen the case, because he felt it had been concluded satisfactorily with the acquittal of Bridges. This resulted in a strongly worded rebuke from the secretary of state, and Belmore was forced to instruct the attorney general Hugo James to reopen the case.⁷¹ At the start of 1831, Murray was replaced by Viscount Goderich, who was noted for his abolitionist views.⁷² He applied further pressure on Belmore concerning the reopening of the Hylton case as well as the case of the enslaved Henry Williams, who was flogged for attending a Methodist church service.⁷³ The events illustrated the great degree of metropolitan interference that Belmore had to contend with. The interventions largely involved the institution of slavery, meaning that Belmore found himself placed between the demands from the London government and the reticence of the local legislators. To complicate matters, Wellington had resigned in November 1830 and was replaced by the

⁶⁸ *Greville memoirs*, p. 150.

⁶⁹ Petley, *Slaveholders*, pp 95-96.

⁷⁰ 'Defence of the Rev. Mr. Bridges' in *The Anti-Slavery Reporter*, 20 October 1830, pp 440-41.

⁷¹ 'The Rev. G. W. Bridges and his slave, Kitty Hylton' in *The Anti Slavery Reporter*, 2 April, 1831, pp 246-248.

⁷² P. J. Jupp, 'Robinson, Frederick John, first Viscount Goderich and first earl of Ripon (1782-1859)' in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004) (<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/23836>) (13 Dec. 2016).

⁷³ Williams resided on the Rural Retreat plantation in St Ann, and the incident was related to the London authorities, with Murray again ordering Belmore to investigate. In this case the overseer, Mr Betty, died before Belmore could carry out the instructions of the secretary of state; see 'The case of slave Henry Williams' in *The Anti-Slavery Reporter*, 1 March 1831, pp 145-151.

Whig prime minister Lord Grey. Belmore's Tory credentials put him on a difficult footing with the incumbent government.

The scrutiny of the metropolitan power increased further after the events surrounding the Baptist War, the last uprising to take place on the island before emancipation. At the end of 1831, shortly after Christmas, a rebellion took hold of most of the north western part of the island. The cause was the widespread expectation of emancipation among the enslaved population. When Belmore's government refused to acknowledge this, a revolt broke out led by Sam Sharpe, a black Baptist preacher. In response, Belmore declared martial law and sent in a large number of troops, defeating the rebellion at the beginning of January.⁷⁴ The forceful suppression gained a lot of publicity back in Britain, where the level of violence that the enslaved were subjected to was highlighted in the abolitionist press.⁷⁵ Belmore's response to the rebellion provided the Whig government with further cause to recall him, especially after he had fallen out with Goderich.⁷⁶ In April 1832, the secretary of state wrote to Belmore and listed fourteen breaches of duty during his time as governor. In June of that year, Belmore sailed for England.⁷⁷

In the aftermath of the Baptist War, Belmore appointed the Irish barrister Fitzherbert Batty as acting attorney general. Originally from Co. Meath, Batty matriculated at Oxford and was called to the Bar in 1817 at Lincoln's Inn.⁷⁸ He moved to Jamaica soon after and was listed as a barrister on the island in 1824.⁷⁹ The Batty family was related to the Irish Richards brothers who had a successful law practice in Kingston in the late eighteenth century. The Jamaican plantation holdings of the Richards family passed to the Battys in the early

⁷⁴ *A narrative of recent events*, pp 149-56.

⁷⁵ *Journal of the House of Commons* (16 Mar. 1832) xi, p. 329.

⁷⁶ Somerset Richard Lowry-Corry Belmore (4th Earl), *The history of two Ulster manors and of their owners* (London, 1903), p. 283.

⁷⁷ Peter Marson, *Belmore: The Lowry Corrys of Castle Coole, 1646-1913* (Belfast, 2007), pp 184-87.

⁷⁸ *The records of the honourable society of Lincoln's Inn; the black books* (4 vols, London, 1897) iv, p. 248.

⁷⁹ 'Civil lists' in *Jamaica almanac* (1832).

nineteenth century.⁸⁰ Fitzherbert Batty inherited the Bagnold Spring Estate in St Mary,⁸¹ while his brother, Espine Batty (a barrister in Dublin),⁸² owned the Lambkin Hill estate in the same parish.⁸³ In October 1828 Fitzherbert Batty argued for the prosecution in the case against the Methodist missionary Joseph R. Orton, who was acquitted.⁸⁴ Besides his work as a barrister, Fitzherbert Batty also featured as an elected representative in the assembly for the parish of St Mary.⁸⁵ During one session he remarked that 'If the white inhabitants had not exemplified the spirit of Bonner⁸⁶ in torturing and burning the missionaries and their flocks, it was not for want of will'.⁸⁷ After the death of the attorney general Hugo James, Belmore turned to Batty and appointed him acting attorney general in 1832.⁸⁸ In this role Batty was involved in the prosecution of the Baptist missionary Francis Gardner, who had been arrested, together with the abolitionist William Knibb, and tried in March 1832. Batty failed to secure a conviction in the Gardner case, despite acting as the prosecutor himself.⁸⁹ He was replaced by Dowell O'Reilly and returned to his own law practice. Batty died in 1848.⁹⁰ Upon inheriting the plantations from the Richards family, Fitzherbert Batty became part of the white settler society with ease. His family link with Robert Richards and legal education indicated a continuation of the eighteenth century Protestant Irish lawyer presence in Jamaica. When the Battys claimed for compensation, it showed the extent of the slave

⁸⁰ Will of Fitzherbert Richards (1811) Prob 11/1525/87 (NA).

⁸¹ In 1835 £3965 19s.0d. was given out as compensation for 208 enslaved; see 'Jamaica St Mary 382' (Bagnold Spring Estate) (UCL database).

⁸² *Gentleman's Magazine* (1837) xliii, p. 210.

⁸³ He received £3344 15 s.11d. for 178 enslaved in 1835; Jamaica St Mary 376 (Lambkin Hill Estate) (UCL database).

⁸⁴ Peter Duncan, *A narrative of the Wesleyan mission to Jamaica* (London, 1849), p. 226; *The Wesleyan Methodist Magazine* (1829), viii (3rd series), p. 209.

⁸⁵ 'Civil list: house of assembly' in *Jamaica almanac* (1839); James M. Phillippo, *Jamaica: its past and present state* (London, 1843), p. 359.

⁸⁶ Bonner refers to the Catholic English bishop Edmund Bonner, known for his role in the persecution of heretics during the reign of Mary I.

⁸⁷ Phillippo, *Jamaica*, pp 359-60.

⁸⁸ James had died in early 1832; see Duncan, *A narrative of the Wesleyan mission*, p. 320; 'Will of Hugo James', 1832 (IRO, Liber 112, f. 152).

⁸⁹ He abandoned Knibb's case as a consequence; see *A narrative of recent events connected with the Baptist mission in this island* (Kingston, 1833), p. 87.

⁹⁰ 'Will of Fitzherbert Batty', 1848 (IRO, Liber 124, f. 216).

ownership of the brothers. And Fitzherbert Batty's reported remarks in the assembly indicated that he opposed the abolitionist missionaries and supported the institution of slavery. Together Fitzherbert and Espine received monies for 469 enslaved, which included three domestic slaves at Fitzherbert Batty's house in Spanish Town, where he lived until his death in 1848.⁹¹

The behaviour of Fitzherbert Batty corresponded with that of Hamilton Brown from Co. Antrim, a prominent opponent of abolition. Brown had acquired his first number of enslaved by 1803 and in 1810 purchased a small piece of land in St Ann. Twenty years later he had become one of the largest landowners in the same parish, which became clear when he applied for compensation in 1835. Brown claimed for over twenty-five properties in St Ann and Trelawny, where he often was listed as the executor or receiver.⁹² He was also appointed a magistrate and elected as a member in the assembly, solidifying his position as an important figure in the white settler society. A link of Irish background was found in the names of his properties Antrim and Grier Park.⁹³ He founded Brown Town in the parish of St Ann and upon his death in 1843, aged sixty-eight, a memorial was erected in the Anglican Church grounds of the settlement.⁹⁴ Brown and Fitzherbert Batty illustrated the continuation of the Protestant Irish slave ownership up until the period of abolition. Both were established members of the white settler society, where they held important positions in the judiciary, the assembly and the militia.⁹⁵ As a consequence, they opposed the metropolitan interference and focused on obstructing the missionaries that preached to the enslaved. Their colonial

⁹¹ 'Jamaica St Mary 382' and 'Jamaica St Mary 383 (Richards Pen); and compensation for three enslaved at £80 19s.11d., 'Jamaica St Catherine 553' (UCL database).

⁹² 'Hamilton Brown - summary of individual' (UCL Database).

⁹³ 'Return of givings-in for the parish of St Ann' in *Jamaica Almanac* (1832).

⁹⁴ Henry Whiteley, *Three months in Jamaica, in 1832: comprising a residence of seven weeks on a sugar plantation* (1833), pp 1-3; Robert Lalah, 'Uncovering secrets in Brown's Town, *The Gleaner* (10 July 2012).

⁹⁵ Batty was listed as a Quartermaster and Hamilton as a Captain in the 1824 militia list; see 'Jamaica militia' in *Jamaica Almanac* (1824).

experiences and identity was closely related to the white settler elite, meaning they had adapted completely to the local circumstances of race and wealth.

Belmore returned to England, where he took his seat in the House of Lords. In August 1833, he attacked both Grey and Goderich during the second reading of the Abolition of Slavery Bill. And while his speech was political, it did illustrate Belmore's views on slavery, which supported the economic argument put forward by the West Indian planters.⁹⁶ He argued that 'if such coercion and restraint be necessary to maintain productive labour (...) either productive labour will, in a great measure, cease in our colonies when the slaves may be emancipated, or even less than a principle will be gained, a change in terms only, – the change from slavery to legal tyranny'.⁹⁷ Belmore's speech was a reflection of his colonial experience in Jamaica and presented a white settler view of slavery.⁹⁸ His colonial experiences in the imperial service illustrated the influence of the metropole. It was thanks to his political connections in London that he obtained the position of governor. His view on the institution of slavery was informed by his siding with the white settler elite on the island, which led to his extraordinary speech in the House of Lords, where he defended the interest of the slaveholders in the West Indies.

In contrast to Belmore, the Protestant Irish Browne family had a longstanding connection with Jamaica through the ownership of two plantations. When Howe Peter Browne, second marquess of Sligo, became governor of the island in 1834, it presented the return to Jamaica of the great grandson of the former chief justice Denis Kelly.⁹⁹ His daughter, Elizabeth Kelly, had married Peter Browne, the son of the future earl of Altamont, in 1752. The Browne family had traditionally held lands in Co. Mayo, having settled around

⁹⁶ *Debates on the resolutions and bill for the abolition of slavery in the British colonies* (London, 1833), pp 812-18 (12 Aug. 1833).

⁹⁷ *Ibid*, 812-13.

⁹⁸ There was no indication in the records that Belmore owned slaves; however, the personnel of the Governor's residence King's House in Spanish Town included several enslaved in the first half of the nineteenth century; see Colleen A. Vasconcellos, *Slavery, childhood, and abolition in Jamaica, 1788-1838* (Athens, 2015), p. 29.

⁹⁹ See Chapter 6, section ii.

Westport in the seventeenth century.¹⁰⁰ The Brownes never ventured out to Jamaica, and instead leased the plantations to James Daly and Thomas Kelly.¹⁰¹ The Dalys would later develop their own connection with the island and owned Daly's Grove in the parish of Manchester.¹⁰² Elizabeth died in 1765,¹⁰³ and her offspring would eventually rise to prominence in both Ireland and England, supported by Jamaican possessions and maintaining the Kelly legacy. The Browne family developed Westport House in north Mayo aided by the income from the sugar plantations in Jamaica.¹⁰⁴ They remained absentee plantation owners, who relied on the structures of Empire to conduct their business. This was illustrated by John Denis Browne, Elizabeth's eldest son, who managed the plantations from Ireland, and organised the sugar transports. He became a notable Irish politician whose loyalty was rewarded with the title of marquess of Sligo in 1800.¹⁰⁵

Referred to in the Westport papers as Lord Altamont, John Denis showed great interest in the Cocoa Walk plantation in Jamaica. He established a record of the lands once owned by Denis Kelly and corresponded extensively with his attorney on the island. Like his grandfather, he guarded his West Indian inheritance with vigour. When he felt that a Liverpool merchant had taken too much commission, when selling his hogsheads of sugar, he took him to court. The merchant, Mr French, was of Irish origin, with a father still living in Co. Galway. Altamont appeared to prefer using Irish mercantile connections, although he did seek redress in the London courts, which was duly given.¹⁰⁶ Through the revenue from the Jamaican sugar estates and his Irish lands, Altamont managed to build up the wealth and

¹⁰⁰ Edward Kimber, *The peerage of Ireland* (2 vols, London, 1768), pp 204-05.

¹⁰¹ Indentures, 25 May 1758 (NLI, Westport papers, MS 41,068 (3)).

¹⁰² They received £2318 11s. 6d. in compensation, 'Jamaica Manchester 105 (Daly's Grove)', (UCL website).

¹⁰³ J. Burke, *A general and heraldic dictionary of peerage and baronetage of the British Empire* (3rd ed., London, 1830), pp 705-06.

¹⁰⁴ It is difficult to estimate the annual return but in 1794, there was a bond of indemnity issued at the value of £1000 on the receipt of sugar from Jamaica; see Bond of indemnity for £1000, 20 Jan. 1794 (N.L.I, Westport Papers, MS 41,068/6).

¹⁰⁵ Although Westport is not in Co. Sligo, Altamont could not take the title of Marquess of Mayo or Galway because these had already been created.

¹⁰⁶ 'Bundle of legal papers, 1793-4' (NLI, Westport papers, MS 41,068/5).

political power of the family. The legacy of the Kelly brothers, consolidated by Denis, had become an integral part of the wealth that the marquess of Sligo relied on by the end of the eighteenth century. Unlike other absent property owners in the West Indies who lost their property, the Browne family was able to maintain their interest until the 1830s. While they were absent plantation owners, the family owned a number of enslaved on the two estates in Jamaica.

The Irish peer Howe Peter Browne, second marquess of Sligo, arrived as governor of Jamaica in April 1834 and was in every way the opposite of Belmore. Sligo became sympathetic to the abolitionist cause after he had attended a House of Lords hearing on the condition of the enslaved in 1832.¹⁰⁷ He was appointed by the secretary of state Lord Stanley, who had proposed the Abolition of Slavery Bill in 1833.¹⁰⁸ As a slaveholder, the other planters initially perceived Sligo as of a similar persuasion. However, Sligo had little time to concern himself with the plantations, Cocoa Walk and Kelly's, and instead set about implementing the apprenticeship system. In the first months of his governorship, he concentrated fully on the activities of the special magistrates. Where Belmore had been reluctant to interfere in the affairs of the white settlers, Sligo did so regularly. He removed magistrates that he deemed unfit from their posts and actively promoted free coloured men to government positions.¹⁰⁹ While his position as a slave owner on the island appears at odds with white unity, in his actions Sligo divorced himself from the plantations and let his attorney concern himself with the business affairs. He quickly found himself at odds with the assembly when trying to improve the conditions of the prisons on the island.¹¹⁰ When the governor expressed views in support of the former enslaved and began to increase the number

¹⁰⁷ Holt, *The problem of freedom*, pp 98-99.

¹⁰⁸ Stanley was the Chief Secretary of Ireland before he was appointed Secretary of State of the Colonies.

¹⁰⁹ Holt, *The problem of freedom*, pp 99-100.

¹¹⁰ William Burge, *Speech at the bar of the House of Commons, against the bill intituled "An act to make temporary provision for the government of Jamaica" Monday, 22nd April 1839* (London, 1839), pp 47-53.

of free coloured in government positions, the European settlers viewed it as a threat to white unity.¹¹¹

Sligo received support from the Irish-born attorney general Dowell O'Reilly, who had succeeded Fitzherbert Batty in 1832. O'Reilly was originally from Co. Louth and from a Catholic family. In January 1832, he was called to Bar at Lincoln's Inn, and had already been appointed attorney general of Jamaica in the same year.¹¹² Evidently there was some delay in him taking up his position, as he did not arrive on the island until May 1834.¹¹³ As a Catholic, O'Reilly had used the structures of Empire in obtaining his position, in which he remained until his death, aged sixty, in 1855.¹¹⁴ His brother, Walter O'Reilly, had married the widowed duchess of Roxburghe, which possibly provided Dowell with the required connections to obtain the position of attorney general.¹¹⁵ In Jamaica, O'Reilly was able to openly practise his religion while maintaining an important position in local government. Ten years before his death, he helped establish a Catholic Church in Spanish Town.¹¹⁶ It indicated that in the 1830s a Catholic Irishman such as O'Reilly could openly practise his religion in Jamaica, while holding the position of attorney general.

O'Reilly was called to investigate a public demonstration of support for the governor, when rumours about Sligo's resignation began to circulate in April 1836.¹¹⁷ From the testimonies gathered by O'Reilly it became clear that support for the governor largely originated from the free coloured population. Sligo was eventually replaced by Sir Lionel Smith in August 1836 and left the island a month later. Sligo handed the administration of the

¹¹¹ James A. Thome and Joseph H. Kimbal, *Emancipation in the West Indies: a six months' tour in Antigua, Barbadoes, and Jamaica in 1837* (New York, 1838), pp 426, 441-43.

¹¹² *The records of the honourable society of Lincoln's Inn*, p. 253; *Gentleman's Magazine* (1855) xliv, p. 651.

¹¹³ He was sworn as a member of the council in May 1832; see 'Jamaica council, February 1833', *Parliamentary Papers*, House of Commons (London, 1833) xxvi, p. 544.

¹¹⁴ 'Return of the members of the council of Jamaica, February 1833' in *Accounts and papers* (17 vols, London, 1833), p. 544; *Gentleman's Magazine* (1855) xliv, p. 651.

¹¹⁵ Walter O'Reilly had been a lieutenant colonel in the Royal African Corps; see *A list of the officers of the army and of the corps of royal marines* (London, 1841), p. 459.

¹¹⁶ *Laws of Jamaica* (Kingston, 1844), p. 104.

¹¹⁷ *The case of W. Ramsay* (London, 1836), p. 14.

estates over to his attorney, William Ramsay.¹¹⁸ In that capacity he did claim financial compensation for the 167 enslaved on Cocoa Walk and 119 at Kelly's.¹¹⁹ He sold his plantations in 1841.¹²⁰ Sligo quickly became convinced that the apprenticeship system had serious flaws and indicated as much in his reports to the London government.¹²¹ Sligo's own legacy on the island can still be found in Jamaica today.¹²² Ten miles outside Spanish Town, a small community, founded by the Baptist minister James M. Phillippo, still bears the name Sligoville.¹²³ While Belmore and Sligo were both from Protestant Irish aristocratic stock, they differed in their colonial experience and attitude towards slavery. Belmore chose to align himself with the white planters, while Sligo opposed them, despite being a slaveholder. Permanent residents such as Fitzherbert Batty and Hamilton Brown integrated fully as slave owners and local assembly men, while O'Reilly, in his position as attorney general, sustained the white settlers. Through their actions in support of the white elite all three men subscribed fully to the concept of white unity.

III Madden

Besides their role in local government, the Irish also featured as abolitionists on the island. This section will illustrate that experience through the Catholic Irish abolitionist Richard Robert Madden, who was employed as a special magistrate in Jamaica from 1833 to 1834. As a sojourner Madden's colonial experience offered an outside view of white settler society in Jamaica in the first half of the nineteenth century. He published a narrative of his experiences as *A twelvemonth's residence in the West Indies*.¹²⁴ This is supplemented by the fragments of

¹¹⁸ 'Sale of Jamaican estates', 1841 (NLI, Westport papers MS 41,095/6).

¹¹⁹ For Cocoa Walk a total of £3221 13s.11d. and for Kelly's £2304 15s. 2d; 'Jamaica St Dorothy 100' (Cocoa Walk); Jamaica St Dorothy 6 (Kelly's) (UCL website).

¹²⁰ 'Sale of Jamaican estates'.

¹²¹ [Peter Howe Browne, marquess of Sligo], *Jamaica under the apprenticeship system* (London, 1838), pp i-xx.

¹²² Catherine Hall, 'White visions, black lives: the free villages of Jamaica' in *History Workshop*, xxxvi (Autumn, 1993), pp 100-32.

¹²³ Edward B. Underhill, *The life of James Mursell Phillippo: missionary in Jamaica* (London, 1881), pp 184-85.

¹²⁴ Richard Robert Madden, *A twelvemonth's residence in the West Indies* (2 vols, London, 1835).

a diary that was kept by his wife, Harriet Madden.¹²⁵ This section will focus on the aspects around Madden's position of special magistrate, his encounters with the other Irish on the island and his search for the plantation owned by the maternal side of Madden's family.

When Madden returned from his travels around the Middle East towards the end of the 1820s, he became involved in the abolitionist movement in London and joined the Anti-Slavery Society.¹²⁶ Richard Robert Madden was born in Dublin in 1798,¹²⁷ and became a writer to finance his studies in medicine. By the 1830s he had a prolific career as a travel writer and polemicist. In 1828 Madden married Harriet Elmsie, the daughter of a Jamaican plantation owner. Her family owned the Serge Island plantation on the island and her brother Henry, whom she visited during their stay, managed it.¹²⁸ In 1833, the government in London proceeded with the appointment of special magistrates to oversee the transition from the institution of slavery to the apprenticeship system.¹²⁹ Madden was one of the first to be appointed by Lord Stanley, and he sailed on 8 October 1833 on a four-week journey.¹³⁰

Legislation had left the duties of the special magistrates deliberately vague so that the local government could fill in the specifics. Due to a shortage, the secretary of state had given Sligo the power to appoint magistrates locally.¹³¹ When Madden and the other magistrates arrived on 8 November 1833, the local newspapers were dismissive about their presence. He and his wife had left their young son back with friends in England.¹³² The day after their arrival, Madden went to see governor Mulgrave, but as abolition of slavery was not enacted

¹²⁵ His son published a biography: Thomas M. Madden, *Memoirs of Dr. R. R. Madden* (Dublin, 1899).

¹²⁶ 'R. R. Madden to Major-General Napier', 28 Aug. 1842 (RIA, Madden papers, MS 24/13/40).

¹²⁷ Leon Ó Broin, 'R. R. Madden, historian of the United Irishmen' in *Irish University Review*, ii (1972), pp 20-33.

¹²⁸ The plantation Serge Island in St Thomas in the East, the Elmsie family received £4853 6s. 0d. compensation for 254 enslaved in 1836; 'Jamaica, St Thomas in the East, Surrey 468A-D' (UCL Slavery Database).

¹²⁹ *Debates on the resolutions and bill for the abolition of slavery in the British colonies* (London, 1834), pp 869-71.

¹³⁰ T. M. Madden, *Memoirs*, p. 86.

¹³¹ Thomas C. Holt, *The problem of freedom: race, labor, and politics in Jamaica and Britain, 1832-1938* (London, 1992), pp 57-58.

¹³² 'Extracts from the diary of Harriet Madden' in T. M. Madden, 'Appendix to Madden memoirs' (RIA, Madden papers, MS 24/0/12), pp 165-67.

until August 1834, he became part of the ordinary set of magistrates in the area around Kingston.¹³³ Due to his abolitionist views, Madden was perceived to be a threat to white unity and considered to favour the enslaved. When the apprenticeship system was put into place, it led to a confrontation between Madden and the former slave owners. They suspected a degree of favouritism towards the apprentices. This was not without foundation, as Madden expressed an interest in the enslaved. This interest was illustrated by relating a conversation he had with a former enslaved man, Abu Bukiz, who spoke Arabic. He presented Bukiz as an equal, someone who he considered an educated man and a scholar.¹³⁴ This view presented a direct threat to white unity and undermined Madden's position as a special magistrate.

During their stay in Jamaica, the Maddens encountered others that had connections with Ireland. One of these was Samuel J. Geoghegan, a resident of Kingston, who inadvertently found himself at the centre of a political tussle in 1820. Since the eighteenth century, the Jewish community on the island had been petitioning for the right to vote in local elections, as they paid considerable taxes in the country. At the start of the nineteenth century, while other religious denominations had been granted a degree of freedom, the Jewish community of Kingston became more proactive in asserting their rights. On the day of the assembly elections, a number of them attempted to cast their vote, including Levy Hyman, a powerful merchant and plantation owner. However, Geoghegan, in his position as the returning officer in the 1820 election, had to enforce the rules, and refused to give Hyman a ballot paper. Samuel Geoghegan was subsequently sued by Hyman and others, although this did not lead to a conviction or a resolution over the voting issue.¹³⁵ Samuel Geoghegan and his brother Thomas were deputy marshal for Kingston and St Catherine respectively. As the conflict with the Jewish community demonstrated, Samuel and Thomas had become part

¹³³ Ibid., 167.

¹³⁴ R. R. Madden, 'The life and history of Abu Bukiz Sudite, alias Edward Doulon' (RIA, Madden papers, MS 24/0/60).

¹³⁵ *Narrative of the proceedings of the Jews in their attempt to establish their right to the elective franchise in Jamaica* (Belfast, 1823), pp 74-101; *JAJ*, xiii, 465-71.

of the white settler society. Both men claimed compensation for a small number of enslaved, which indicated that they were not plantation owners.¹³⁶

The Geoghegans socialised with the Maddens, and Harriet described them as ‘very agreeable, she is a native [Jamaican born] and he is an Irishman. He told me he had lost five children, and yet wanted to persuade me that the climate was not inimical to European children.’¹³⁷ Samuel remained listed as a deputy marshal, although his brother Thomas had passed away by 1832.¹³⁸ It appears that when the two couples met up, the controversial subjects of the day were not mentioned.¹³⁹ In this case, with Harriet maintaining the social connection, the perceived threat to white unity was less. Her family formed part of the white planter elite through the ownership of Serge Mountain and posed no threat to white unity. Harriet later visited her brother at the plantation, where her ambivalent attitude towards the enslaved indicated that she took a different view on slavery than her husband. Harriet did support her husband in his position as special magistrate. However, her diary fragments end during her visit to Serge Mountain.

On the maternal side of Madden’s family, there had also been the ownership of the Marley plantation in the parish of St Mary. It had changed hands a number of times and by the end of the eighteenth century it was bought by Dr Lyons, originally from Lyonstown in Co. Roscommon.¹⁴⁰ Madden explained that his great uncle ‘the doctor [Lyons] having accumulated considerable property in Jamaica, returned to his native country. The property in the meantime was managed by my mother’s brother.’¹⁴¹ When Dr Lyons died shortly after he arrived back in Ireland, the question of the inheritance arose. His brother, Theodosius Lyons,

¹³⁶ Samuel received £369 8s. 4d. for thirteen enslaved and Thomas £75 18s. 11d. for four enslaved in 1836; see ‘Jamaica St Andrew 529’ and ‘Jamaica St Ann 101’ (UCL website).

¹³⁷ ‘Diary of Harriet Madden’, i, 159.

¹³⁸ *JAJ*, xiv, 172.

¹³⁹ ‘Diary of Harriet Madden’, p. 214.

¹⁴⁰ Listed as ‘Marlie’ in 1811, with 120 enslaved and 73 livestock; ‘Givings-in for the parish of St Mary’ in *Jamaica almanac* (1811).

¹⁴¹ Garrett Forde, the inheritance went entirely through the maternal line of Madden’s family.

inherited the Marley plantation, but died a few years later in Spanish Town. Garrett Forde, Madden's uncle who had managed it, also died shortly after and was buried close to the plantation. Robert Lyons, a cousin of Madden, inherited the property and had died a year before Madden set out for Jamaica.¹⁴²

While on the island, Madden decided to investigate a possible claim to the plantation and travelled to the parish of St Mary.¹⁴³ On his journey, he was introduced to an old man, formerly Dr Lyons's enslaved waiting-boy, who showed no interest in engaging with Madden.¹⁴⁴ When he arrived 'at the ruined works of Marley',¹⁴⁵ Madden was again confronted with his family's slaveholding past. In the old plantation house he found the offspring of his uncle, Theodosius Lyons, that he had with an enslaved woman. She had been manumitted upon his death.¹⁴⁶ One son had, however, been sold into slavery as a consequence of the bankruptcy of the estate.¹⁴⁷ Madden travelled to the Derry plantation, three miles further inland, which had also been in the possession of Dr Lyons. Madden's uncle Garrett Forde, who had managed both plantations, was buried there. The plantation had no family link and had been sold.¹⁴⁸ After the confrontation with his family's past, any idea about a claim for Marley was abandoned. These encounters confronted Madden with the slaveholding past of his mother's family. They illustrated the complexities of his colonial experience, where Madden was perceived to be supportive of the former enslaved as a special magistrate, while his wife and his own family had links to slavery.

¹⁴² In 1823 Robert Lyons was noted as the owner, while the property listed ninety-two enslaved and sixty-eight livestock, 'Return of givings-in for the parish of St Mary' in *Jamaica almanac* (1823); R. R. Madden, *A twelvemonth residence*, i, pp 225-26.

¹⁴³ R. R. Madden, *A twelvemonth residence*, i, pp 220 -31.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 222.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 231.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 233.

¹⁴⁷ No claim for compensation was given in for the Marley/Marlie estate, confirming that the plantation had been abandoned. In 1845 it was listed as 100 acres in the ownership of W. V. Ansel; see 'Returns of proprietors' in *Jamaica almanac* (1845).

¹⁴⁸ The plantation had been sold to Francis Bowen, his executor John Burke received £2001 12s.1d. compensation for 108 enslaved, 'Jamaica St Mary 416 (Derry)' (UCL website), R. R. Madden, *A twelvemonth residence*, p. 238.

In October 1834, Madden resigned his position after a confrontation with a number of protestors.¹⁴⁹ As the Kingston authorities failed to support him, Madden felt that he had no choice but to resign. He wrote to Sligo, where he outlined his reasons for stepping down, concluding with ‘after a twelvemonth’s struggle with the difficulties of my situation, I resigned my appointment’.¹⁵⁰ Sligo was greatly disappointed by Madden’s decision, writing to him that ‘it is with much regret that I have learned from you your unalterable determination to leave Jamaica, and give up your office of special justice’.¹⁵¹ Madden and his wife left Jamaica on the 15 November 1834 and returned to London, where he set about writing a book about his experiences. Despite the encounter with his distant relatives, he continued to advocate the abolition of the apprenticeship system and displayed his disdain for the planters on the island. The book itself had only limited success, but it did result in Madden being called as a witness to the House of Commons select committee that investigated the apprenticeship system in 1836.¹⁵² There he was asked to explain several claims made in the book. One of these involved a discussion around the food and clothing allowances of the apprentices. Madden argued that the apprentices were still entitled to these, while the legal advice given by Fitzherbert Batty rejected it.¹⁵³ This illustrated that Madden’s opinions placed him outside of white unity. He would continue his engagement with the former enslaved and acted as a government commissioner in British-occupied Cuba and reported on the illegal slave trade from West Africa.

The case studies in this chapter highlight the Irish links with slavery in the period of abolition. Benjamin McMahon’s time on the island illustrates the life of the poor white Irish and their links with the enslaved and free coloured population. McMahon used the Irish

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., ii, 210-12.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., 215-16.

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

¹⁵² His appearance was spread over two days, 26 and 29 Apr. 1836; see *Report from the select committee on negro apprenticeship in the colonies* (London, 1836), pp 49-85.

¹⁵³ Ibid., 50-54.

connections on the island to find employment, but they were too fragmented to be described as a local social network. Wealth and race predominantly featured in his colonial experience, although McMahon did once find that his Irish origin stopped him from gaining a promotion. His period in Jamaica contrasted sharply with the second-generation O'Connor family that had fully established themselves as part of the white elite on the island. The Protestant Irish in local government had links with the metropole, as is illustrated by the earl of Belmore. He obtained his position through London connections without having a direct link with the island. He subscribed to the notion of white unity, which is further highlighted through the actions of both Fitzherbert Batty and Hamilton Brown. When the Catholic Irish Dowell O'Reilly became attorney general, he became part of the elite in Jamaica. White unity was undermined by the actions of Sligo, who introduced free coloureds into local government. He demonstrated a degree of favour for the former enslaved, despite being a plantation owner. Abolitionists, like Madden, were perceived as a threat to white unity and their colonial experiences featured obstruction. Still, Madden had direct links to slavery through the family of his wife and his maternal ancestors. This illustrates the complex relationship between slavery and the Irish in the period of abolition. The case studies in this chapter highlight how the Irish in Jamaica largely sustained white unity, even if, as in the case of the Geoghegans, they owned only a small number of slaves and continued to use metropolitan links to gain positions.

Conclusion

This dissertation has considered the Protestant, Catholic and Dissenter Irish in Jamaica during the long eighteenth century in the context of Jamaican society and the British Empire. This period has provided the opportunity to survey the changing character of the Irish presence. The case studies illustrate how the Irish functioned in Jamaican society throughout the period. This conclusion will assess the three different colonial experiences as presented in the case studies, with a focus on local government, the plantations and slavery. It will further discuss the impact of the imperial structures on the links between Ireland and Jamaica, which is followed by an assessment of the effect of Empire on the Irish in Jamaica. Lastly, it will discuss the Irish links with the institution of slavery in Jamaica. These aspects frame the concluding remarks of this chapter, which take into account the multiple case studies presented.

The case studies have illustrated the different religious affiliations of the Irish in Jamaica. This aspect set them apart from the other white settlers. In the eighteenth century, the enforcement of the oaths of allegiance and supremacy set Catholic Irish apart from the Protestant Irish, who did not face these restrictions. The individual experiences of, for instance, John Stapleton, Andrew Arcedeckne, and Benjamin McMahon underlined the difficult position of the Irish, when they faced challenges in relation to their nationality and religion. They highlighted the occasionally strained relationship between the Irish and the other settlers throughout the long eighteenth century. In addition, the case studies underlined the adaptability of the Irish, when, for instance, both Stapleton and McMahon circumnavigated the challenges they were confronted with. A further aspect that this dissertation has shed new light on is the developing research area of the Protestant Irish in the Caribbean.

The Protestant Irish in Jamaica featured as law professionals in the eighteenth century, while they also entered local government. They featured as members of the assembly and in positions such as attorney general and chief justice. The political involvement of the Protestant Irish in the eighteenth century was characterised by opportunism and disruption, further expanding on Trevor Burnard's findings.¹ This was illustrated in the case studies of William Brodrick and Hugh Totterdell, which highlighted a degree of opposition to the executive power. Especially Totterdell's period as an assembly member in the early eighteenth century was marked by persistent opposition. The case study of William Brodrick demonstrated how, together with Richard Lloyd, he consistently opposed Governor Beeston. Brodrick's colonial experiences also highlighted a degree of mobility of the Protestant Irish as he moved between Jamaica, Ireland and the Leeward Islands during his career. Their roles as barristers, attorney general and chief justice made the Protestant Irish in Jamaica a visible presence on the island during the eighteenth century. This was in contrast to the Catholic Irish, who were more difficult to discern.

The Catholic Irish presence in Jamaica should be divided into two periods, before and after the re-establishment of the Catholic Church in the 1790s. As the case studies in Chapter 4 illustrated, the Catholic Irish faced a number of formal restrictions that centred on the oaths of supremacy and allegiance. Restrictions on the Irish Catholics resulted in greater scrutiny after the French invasion of 1694. The case studies highlighted the fragmented nature of the Catholic Irish presence that left less source material to consider. The enforcement of the oaths meant that the Catholic Irish could not sit in the assembly or enter the officer class in the militia. However, the case studies did establish that the Catholic Irish were able to obtain property on the island. This meant that they could vote in the assembly elections, as the McGrath case study revealed. The Hanigan and Corr case studies illustrated the informal

¹ Trevor Burnard, 'European migration to Jamaica, 1655-1780' in *The William and Mary Quarterly*, liii (Oct. 1996), pp 785.

links that the Catholic Irish maintained. The case study of John Stapleton highlighted the degree of mobility of the Catholic Irish as pointed out by Power. In the period after 1790 the Catholic presence in Jamaica changed with the establishment of the church in Kingston and removal of the restrictions on official positions. The case study of Dowell O'Reilly demonstrated that the Catholic Irish could hold a government position in the 1830s while being an openly practising Catholic. In comparison to the outsider Stapleton, who had to flee the island, O'Reilly had become part of the establishment and white elite. Despite the limited source material, the case studies established that a number of Catholic Irish had settled in Jamaica throughout the long eighteenth century, and that they were mobile and able to find different opportunities through informal connections.

The case studies in this dissertation underpinned the findings of Nini Rodgers in *Ireland, slavery and anti-slavery*. She concluded that the Presbyterians from Ireland in the Caribbean predominantly featured in the trade, which was confirmed by the case study of the merchant Samuel Watt. He also displayed a degree of mobility that Orla Power had presented in her research on St Croix. The case study of the Delap brothers further added to Rodgers' findings and the extended Delap family connections with the Caribbean, especially in the Leeward Islands.² The case of Francis Delap's role as provost marshal presented a study of an Irish Dissenter in local government. His experiences illustrated the links with the Scottish settlers in Jamaica, underlined by the ownership of the Mount Eagle plantation situated in Westmoreland. Francis had links with the Scottish settlers on the island, which showed that he associated himself with other Presbyterians. However, from his only experience it is difficult to arrive at a firm conclusion about the Irish Dissenters and their associations with the Scots. Samuel Watt, who resided in Kingston, did not mention the Scottish Presbyterians nor indicated that he had any contact with them. From the findings in this dissertation, it can

² Nini Rodgers, *Ireland, slavery and anti-slavery 1612-1865* (Basingstoke, 2007), p. 159.

be concluded that the Irish Dissenter presence in Jamaica during the long eighteenth century was marginal, compared to the Protestant and Catholic Irish.

The case studies highlight that a number of the Protestant Irish lawyers became plantation owners. In addition, the colonial experience of the Irish in Jamaica directly involved the institution of slavery. The case study of the Kelly brothers illustrated how family members from Ireland moving to Jamaica were able to obtain property. Denis Kelly managed to consolidate the property portfolio and developed the Cocoa Walk plantation that involved enslaved. Similarly, Andrew Arcedeckne developed the Golden Grove plantation that engaged a large number of enslaved. Both men ensured that their families held on to the plantations that they had acquired, which created a number of Protestant Irish absentee plantation owners in Jamaica. The extended Burke family was less fortunate and this case study is an example of the fragmented Irish property ownership. It highlighted the relationships with the enslaved and the links with Ireland. This was illustrated by the 'misfortune' remark by Thomas Burke, who had fathered a child with a 'mulatto woman'. The property ownership highlighted how the Protestant Irish Arcedeckne and Kelly families became part of the white establishment, and how the extended Burke family developed relationships with the enslaved.

The dissertation highlighted the increased significance of Empire during the second half of the eighteenth century, which involved local governance and mercantile links between Ireland and Jamaica. The Spanish Town and Privilege controversies illustrated the involvement of the Irish in two conflicts that directly concerned the London government. The structure of the British Empire enabled Francis Delap to work under the patent of the provost marshal, while the holder of the patent, Alexander Innes, resided in Scotland. Delap's involvement in the Spanish Town controversy underlined the imperial involvement, when he became the subject of a pamphlet also published in London aimed at highlighting the abuses

of power by Governor Knowles. It demonstrated the increased metropolitan scrutiny of local Jamaican politics that continued with the Privilege Controversy. A member of the extended Protestant Irish Arcedekne family, Nicholas Bourke, expressed the tensions between the local assembly and the metropole in the pamphlet *Jamaica vindicated*. His arguments on the independence of the local legislation referred back to Poynings' Law and the mechanism of government in Ireland. Bourke used the structures of Empire to publish political arguments through his pamphlet in both Kingston and London. Both controversies illustrate the imperial impact on the Irish in Jamaica.

The mercantile links which were developed in the seventeenth century around the supply trade resulted in continuing trade links between Ireland and Jamaica during the long eighteenth century. This also linked Ireland with the institution of slavery, as Nick Draper pointed out.³ In the case of the Irish trading house Nesbitt in London this was extended to the part ownership of a plantation in Jamaica, while in the case study of Samuel Watt this was illustrated in the ownership of a number of enslaved. The imperial structures facilitated merchants from Ireland to trade with the Caribbean as highlighted by the Waddell Cunningham partnership. In addition, the structures of Empire enabled the mobility of the Irish merchants as illustrated by Samuel Watt, who first settled on Barbados, had links with British Guyana and eventually moved to Jamaica, where he was able to set up a small trading house. He retained connections with Ireland through extended family links and moved goods between Ireland and the West Indies. The mercantile links further confirmed Alvin Jackson's observation that, 'Irish people who might be constraint at home also had access to the Empire and the social and economic opportunities it provided'.⁴

³ Nick Draper, 'Research note: "Dependent on precarious subsistences": Ireland's slave-owners at the time of emancipation' in *Britain and the World*, vi (Sept. 2013), pp 220-42.

⁴ Alvin Jackson, 'Ireland, the Union, and the Empire, 1800-1960' in Kevin Kenny (ed.), *Ireland and the British Empire* (Oxford, 2004), p. 136.

The Irish in Jamaica experienced the effect of Empire towards the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century. This was characterised by the military presence during the Haitian Revolution and illustrated by the case study of governor Nugent, who brought his own regiment, raised in Ireland, to Jamaica. This brought an increased Irish presence on the island, facilitated by the British Empire. The case study of Hugh Lyle Carmichael demonstrated the degree of mobility and transient nature of the Irish in the army. It also revealed the extended family connections of both Carmichael and Maria Nugent, who both had family members in Jamaica. It must be emphasised that the increase in the Irish presence through the arrival of the regiments was temporary due to the high death rate among the soldiers. The sources revealed that only one soldier, John O'Brien, had settled permanently on the island. The army presence in Jamaica included the Catholic Irish who had enlisted in British regiments. In addition, the Catholic presence in Jamaica was augmented by the French-Irish Catholic soldiers and officers, who had moved into the British army. The Irish military presence in the army demonstrated the degree of mobility that the structures of Empire offered in the period around the Haitian Revolution.

The Protestant Irish in the British military became part of the political structure of Empire in the first half of the nineteenth century. They used the imperial connections to embark on a career in civil government. Officers such as John Keane used his political connections with the duke of Wellington to obtain the position of commander and lieutenant governor in Jamaica. Those without such influential connections used their military career to enter civil government. This was illustrated by Hugh Carmichael, who commanded the 2nd West India Regiment stationed in Jamaica for over a decade, before becoming governor of Demerara. The imperial structures provided men like Eyre Coote and Henry Conran with an opportunity to develop a career in civil government. They retained strong links with the army and included a number of Irish officers in their staff. It indicated the degree of mobility of the

Protestant Irish officers offered by the structures of Empire. The Fort Augusta revolt of the enslaved soldiers in the West India Regiment against a number of Irish officers highlighted the difficulties around the policies of the metropole, which had organised the formation of the regiments. In the 1830s the involvement of the London government further increased at the time of the abolition of slavery.

The case studies highlight how the Irish featured in both the abolitionist and pro-slavery groups in Jamaica. The case of Benjamin McMahon revealed the complex relationship between the institution of slavery and Jamaican society, especially in relation to the social position of the 'poor whites'. The period also highlights the contrast between the Protestant Irish governors Belmore and Sligo. Belmore supported the white elite and slavery, while Sligo opposed the planters and argued for the apprenticeship system to be abolished. The case study of R. R. Madden as a special magistrate highlighted the complexity of the anti-slavery aspect, when he discovered his own family's past engagement with the institution of slavery. The individual experiences of Fitzherbert Batty, Hamilton Brown, Samuel Geoghegan and Charles O'Connor illustrated how the Irish had become an integral part of the white settler society on the island in the nineteenth century. Their pro-slavery views indicated the Irish support for white unity that was countered by the opposition of Madden and McMahon to slavery in this period.

This dissertation has presented an evaluation of the Protestant, Catholic and Dissenter Irish presence in Jamaica during the long eighteenth century in the context of Jamaican society and the British Empire. It has highlighted their colonial experiences in relation to local government, the plantations, trade and slavery. The fragmented nature of the evidence found different characteristics in the Protestant and Catholic Irish presence, while the Irish Dissenters only featured marginally. Overall, it can be concluded that while the colonial experiences of the Protestant and Catholic Irish diverged at the beginning of the eighteenth

century, they converged in the early nineteenth century as official restrictions of Catholics were removed. The structures of Empire played a role in providing the Irish with positions in the colonial government and creating the circumstances for a temporary increased Irish military presence in Jamaica. With the exception of sojourners such as Madden, the opposition to the executive power, as displayed by the Protestant Irish lawyers in the eighteenth century, had eroded. By the time of abolition the majority of Irish in Jamaica had become the 'hybridised Britons' in a colonial setting, who supported white unity and formed part of the establishment.

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